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ABSTRACT

The Community Choices program is designed to engage communities in a systematic assessment of the linkages between their human resource attributes and their economic development opportunities. This document contains seven modules. Modules 1-3 lay the foundation for doing public policy education work by (1) defining public policy education and introducing a model that can be used to analyze issues of local importance, (2) reviewing how local decisions are made in many communities and how to identify the key policy makers, and (3) focusing on multicultural awareness and sensitizing participants to the fact that local policy decisions must consider the variety of values and perspectives that exist along cultural lines. Module 4 explains how a local economy works and presents a number of economic development options that communities can consider. Modules 5-7 explore human resource issues in the community: how to assess human resource attributes, giving prominent attention to the relationship between educational attainment and unemployment rates, earned income, and poverty status; migration streams and how they affect the stock of area human resources; and the role that family plays in human resource development. Each module contains an overview, references, activities, and an instructor's guide. (TD)

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Community Choices

Public Policy Education Program

Exploring the Human Resources/Economic Development Connection

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February 2000

SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER
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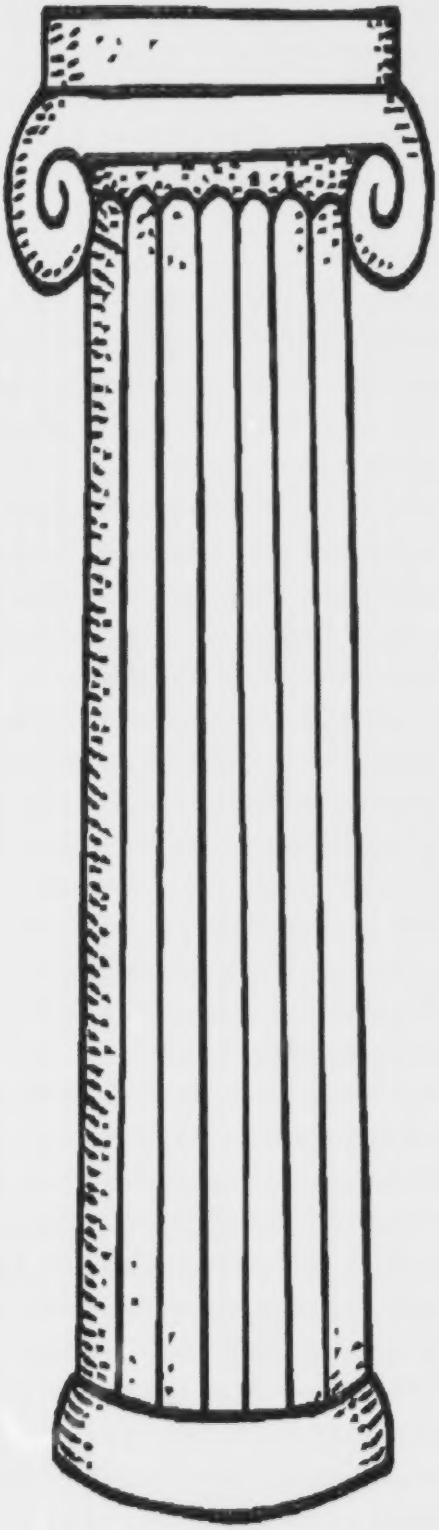

Community Choices

Public Policy Education Program

Program Overview

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February 2000

SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER
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Exploring the Human Resources/ Economic Development Connection:

Program Overview

Introduction

The fundamental assumption of human capital theory is that individuals can "invest" in activities, such as education and job training, which will lead to an enhancement in their abilities (such as their thinking skills, knowledge and experiences). These strengthened abilities will make them more productive and result in increased earnings. The presence of such skilled individuals is an asset to a community because it helps contribute to its economic health. On the other hand, the absence of skilled individuals could limit a community's economic development options.

The Community Choices program is designed to engage communities in a systematic assessment of the linkages between its human resource attributes and its economic development opportunities.

"This program has been designed to give members of rural communities the opportunity to examine the relationship between human capital investment and rural economic development."

The Current Situation

Rural America accounts for more than 60 million people and several rural localities are confronted with human capital problems. As a general rule, rural America leads the nation in the number of families living in poverty, in the percent of labor force members who are unemployed or underemployed, and in the proportion of people who are functionally illiterate. Add to this the fact that only a small segment of the U.S. rural workforce has a college education or more, and you quickly begin to see how America's rural human capital resources can potentially impede efforts to realize substantive enhancements in the economic and social climate of these areas. This is particularly true in the rural South, given that the rural South is the most poorly equipped region in the country on nearly all human resource measures.

Furthermore, a number of rural residents who do receive a college education or substantial job training often migrate to urban communities since these areas often offer these people superior job opportunities. This outward migration further depletes the human resource stock of rural communities. For example, a study by Lichter, McLaughlin, and Cornwel [5] offered strong evidence of the significant shifts that took place in the stock of human resources in rural areas from the 1970s to 1980s. Using the years 1975-76 and 1987-88 as reference points, the authors found that nonmetropolitan areas suffered serious declines in their human capital resources over these two time periods. Unlike the 1970s where the loss of rural America's best and brightest were compensated by the influx

of well educated and talented individuals from metropolitan areas, the exchange of population between metro and nonmetro areas in 1987-88 was somewhat different. As in past decades, nonmetro areas continued to suffer sizable losses of its young, educated, and highly skilled people to the metropolitan areas. But, unlike the 1970s, metropolitan areas were far more likely to keep its best and brightest at home, while exporting to rural America individuals having the lowest levels of education and job skills.

"Whether rural communities must seek to strengthen their human resources before they can expect to attract good jobs to the community can only be answered after a careful consideration of the community by its members."

Data examined over the course of the 1990s offer more encouraging information on the demographic changes occurring in rural America. For example, Beale [1] notes that the lion's share of nonmetropolitan counties grew in population over the 1990-97 time period. And those counties that did gain in population did so as a result of the influx of former metro residents and/or foreign immigrants. Nord and Cromartie [9] further reveal that among the in-migrants to rural America during the 1990s were a sizable number of individuals with college education, a trend that helped to reverse the rural brain drain that was evident in prior decades.

We believe it is essential for community members to explore what the local human resource conditions mean, if anything, to the economic health of rural areas. By better understanding the relationship between human capital investment opportunities and local economic development possibilities, program participants will be able to consider short and long-term policy strategies for promoting the economic health of the community and its members.

These are the issues that have helped give shape to this Community Choices public policy education program dealing with the "Human Resources/Economic Development Connection."

The Human Resources/Economic Development Connection: Is There One in Rural Communities?

The answer to the question of whether a rural community's human capital stock is likely to affect its economic development opportunities is not an easy one because the various sets of evidence tend to produce different conclusions. For example, a report prepared by the Hudson Institute titled *Workforce 2000* claims that America's current workforce is ill equipped for the new jobs coming online in the country [4]. Now that the 21st century has begun, the U.S. is witnessing a classic mismatch between supply and demand resulting from rapid growth in high-skilled jobs and the limited amount of skills possessed by people in the workforce. Under this scenario, the supply/demand mismatch would be more severe in rural America given the poorer quality of its human capital resources.

But a second scenario, presented by Mishel and Teixeira [8] in their Economic Policy Institute report titled *The Myth of the Coming Labor Short-*

age, suggests that the shortage of qualified workers anticipated in the *Workforce 2000* report is faulty. The authors note that skill levels in the job structure are not accelerating at the pace suggested in this report. In fact, limited growth in job skills is taking place and as a result, the supply of workers is not likely to be at odds with the demands of the job market over the next decade or so. If the Mishel and Teixeira argument is correct, then it could be assumed that the supply of rural America's human capital stock is not likely to be a major impediment to the availability of jobs in the local economy.

In a report prepared by a team of social scientists with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service, the issue of the human resources/economic development connection was addressed head-on. In general, the findings showed that economic growth in our nation's rural areas during the decade of the 1980s was not seriously impeded by the low educational status of rural workers. But, as these authors admit, these recent historical trends did not discount the possibility that in some rural communities, education may have stimulated job growth, or that future economic development opportunities in these areas would be directly tied to the availability of a better educated and trained workers.

In a more recent assessment of the "skills gap" debate, however, contributors to an edited volume by Gibbs et al. [3] noted that present day rural America is showing progress in its capacity to educate students, to equip workers with important cognitive skills, and to provide vocational education opportunities. In fact, rural workers are making important headway in becoming more actively engaged in the new economy of the world — one in which technology skills, interpersonal relationships, and group problem-solving capabilities are more a part of the talents that they bring to the work place. At the same time, challenges linger, particularly the need to shore up the academic and job training credentials, and "new economy-related skills," of a broader segment of the rural workforce [3].

These reports tend to leave the answer to the question about the human resources/economic development linkage unclear. It is because of this lack of clarity on this tie that we have opted to devote attention to this issue in this Community Choices public policy education program. We feel it is essential to create a forum in which participants can examine these issues and clarify this linkage in their community. Whether these human capital shortcomings serve as barriers to economic progress in their rural communities is a key issue to be debated by participants during the course of this public policy education program [6].

"The purpose of the Community Choices public policy education program is to offer local citizens an opportunity to apply the public policy education framework to the study and resolution of problems in their community."

Purpose and Objectives

The public policy education framework deals with specialized issues that have distinct options and effects. The ultimate purpose of this type of program is the realization of seeable and touchable results at the local

"The Public Policy Education Model is designed to walk you through a series of logical steps to arrive at solutions that hold promise in helping solve the policy issues under discussion."

The specific objectives of the Community Choices Program are fourfold:

- To introduce the Community Choices public policy education framework to a representative group of community residents and to discuss its application in resolving local public issues and concerns.
- To strengthen local citizens' knowledge of human resource and economic development issues at the national, state, and local levels.
- To create an environment for local citizens to explore linkages between the human resource attributes of a community and its economic development activities/opportunities; and
- Where needed, to actively participate in finding and implementing solutions for advancing the community's economic health through the strengthening of its local human capital.

community level. In this particular educational effort, the focus is on those issues that relate specifically to the human resources/economic development connection in rural communities. The strength of this program is that it seeks to engage you, as local community residents, in a dialogue and assessment of the linkages between economic development opportunities and the human capital attributes of your community. The delivery of this program on a community-by-community basis is designed to give explicit recognition to the fact that the nature of these linkages will likely differ across communities given the unique histories and indigenous resources associated with each of these areas.

The ultimate goal of this program is to strengthen residents' understanding of the complex set of policy issues associated with human capital resources and economic development options; to provide a forum for exploring alternative strategies for dealing with these issues; and to clarify potential impacts associated with these various policy alternatives. The guiding principle of this educational initiative is that better policy decisions are likely to be realized at the local level when an active and informed citizenry is involved in the process.

Program Content

The "Exploring the Human Resources/Economic Development Connection" component of the Community Choices public policy program is organized into three major sections. The first section lays the foundation for doing public policy education work. It begins by giving attention to the meaning of public policy education and introduces a useful model that can be applied to the analysis of issues of local importance. Further, this section offers a brief review of how local decisions are made in many communities and how to identify who the key policymakers often tend to be. The final subject of this section gives focus to the subject of multicultural

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awareness. The intent of this third module is to sensitize program participants to the fact that local policy decisions must give attention to the variety of values and perspectives that exist along cultural lines.

The second phase of this program presents a clear discussion of economic development issues at the local level. It deals with export base theory as a model for understanding how a local economy works. Moreover, it presents a number of economic development options that communities can consider in an effort to encourage local economic development. Understanding how economic development works, and the alternative manner in which it can be achieved, offers the participants a better basis for determining the human resources that will be needed to bring these development opportunities to fruition.

The third and final section of this program explores human resource issues in the community. It begins with a treatment of the key items commonly used to assess the human resource attributes of a community. Among the areas given prominent attention are the linkages between level of education and the rate of unemployment, amount of earned income, and poverty status. Next, the program addresses migration streams into and out of the local community and how these streams affect the stock of human resources in the area. The final topic of this section is the family. The intent is to give explicit recognition to the significant role that the family plays in human resource development.

"As you think about policy, it is important to recognize that, in many cases, certain people are more successful in affecting policy decision than are others."

Program Format and Session Resources

It is not necessary that program participants use all eight modules outlined in Table 1 or utilize them in the order they are presented. Though we obviously feel that each one builds upon the others in providing a clearer understanding of the human capital/economic development connection, community participants should feel free to choose and explore those topics which they deem most relevant to their local situation. We do strongly encourage you, however, to include materials in Sections I and II since they are designed to provide citizens with valuable information on the public policy education process and what economic development options might exist for the community. Once these topics have been addressed, local citizens can proceed in a number of different directions, such as looking at their current human resource stock and how these resources facilitate or impede economic development (Modules 5 and 6) or what the family-related issues are in the community that impact the human resource development of their children (Module 7).

Target Audience

The Community Choices: Public Policy Education Program is designed for any group of local citizens who are interested in and concerned about the policy issues facing their community. Because the specific theme of

Table 1. Topics Covered in the Community Choices: Public Policy Education Program "Exploring the Human Resources/Economic Development Connection"

	Section I
Module One	The Public Policy Education Model: A Framework for Addressing Local Issues
Module Two	Identifying Local Decision Makers
Module Three	Promoting Multicultural Awareness
	Section II
Module Four	Understanding the Local Economy
	Section III
Module Five	The Community's Human Resource Attributes
Module Six	Migration's Impact on the Community's Human Resources
Module Seven	Human Resources and the Family

"Multicultural education is in the best American tradition of liberty and justice and can make available to our society a largely untapped reservoir of human talents and resources."

Each module has resources for presentation, including:

- *Instructor's Guide* which offers recommendations on how the module might be delivered and the amount of time required to present this session;
- *Module Overview* that provides a brief overview of the subject being discussed in the session;
- *Activities* that are intended to offer participants the opportunity to take an active part in applying the information presented in the Module Overview to real live community issues;
- *Background Readings and References* that offer participants additional information related to the subject addressed in the module.

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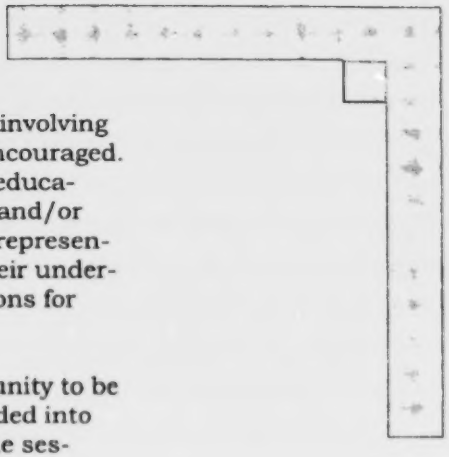

this program is on human resources and economic development, involving people who have some knowledge or interest in these topics is encouraged. Likely candidates for participation are local government officials, educational leaders, representatives of the local chamber of commerce and/or business community, social service agency personnel, civic club representatives, church officials, and others who may wish to enhance their understanding of these issues and are motivated to explore policy options for dealing with these matters.

It is recommended that participants be accorded the opportunity to be involved in the teaching of modules. The group could be subdivided into teams, with each team given the responsibility to teach one of the sessions. This helps the participants feel a sense of ownership with this public policy education initiative. Furthermore, it allows team members to feel more confident in their abilities to take a leadership role in delivering this public policy education program to other residents of their community.

Concluding Remarks

In many rural communities across the country, efforts to create new jobs for local residents place high on the list of priorities. Are these efforts likely to be affected by the quality of the human resources available in these communities? Evidence suggest that local employment growth in nonmetropolitan areas over the course of the 1980s was not influenced significantly by the educational credentials of residents. This may be changing. A recent study by McGranahan [8] indicates that the manufacturing sector, once a seeker of low-skilled rural workers, is now demanding that workers have good skills and ability to operate in a more technology-oriented workplace. Will this trend continue in the manufacturing sector? Will it spread to other key sectors of the rural economy? What will the situation be for rural areas during the coming decade? These are the very issues that leaders and local citizens must give careful attention to if they are to devise policies that are likely to contribute to the long-term economic and social health of the community. It is hoped that the focus of this Community Choices' program on the "Human Resources/Economic Development Connection" theme will serve as an effective vehicle for stimulating active discussion and debate among a broad spectrum of local people about this important subject.

"The existence of 'multiplier' effects associated with basic industry often explains the emphasis of many economic development programs on attracting new, basic industry to the local community."

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[1] Beale, Calvin. 1999. "Nonmetro Population Rebound: Still Real but Diminishing." *Rural Conditions and Trends 9 (2)*:20-27

[2] Economic Research Service. 1991. *Education and Rural Economic Development: Strategies for the 1990s.* Washington, DC: Agriculture and Rural Economy Division, USDA. ERS Staff Report No. AGES9153.

"The ultimate goal of this program is to strengthen residents' understanding of the complex set of policy issues associated with human capital resources and economic development options; to provide a forum for exploring alternative strategies for dealing with these issues; and to clarify potential impacts associated with these various policy alternatives."

[3] Gibbs, Robert M., Paul L. Swaim, and Ruy Teixeira. 1998. Rural Education and Training in the New Economy. Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press.

[4] Johnston, William B. and Arnold E. Packer. 1987. *Workforce 2000: Work and Workers for the 21st Century.* Indianapolis, IN: Hudson Institute.

[5] Lichter, Daniel T., Diane K. McLaughlin, and Gretchen T. Cornwell. 1995. "Migration and the loss of human resources in rural America." Chapter 11 in Lionel J. Beaulieu and David Mulkey (eds.), *Investing in People: The Human Capital Needs of Rural America.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press Rural Studies Series.

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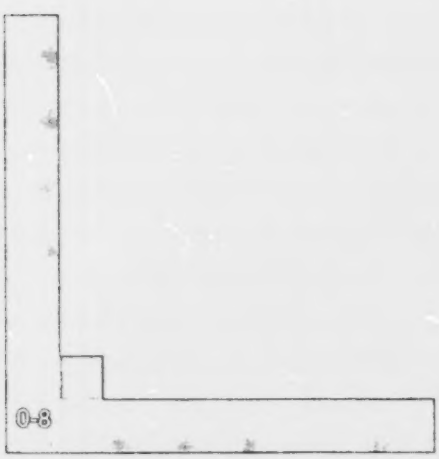
[7] McGranahan, David A. 1999. "Manufacturing Employers Report Widespread Problems with Labor Quality. *Rural Conditions and Trends 9(3)*: 22-27.

[8] Mishel, Lawrence and Ruy A. Teixeira. 1990 *The Myth of Coming Labor Shortage: Jobs, Skills, and Incomes of America's Workforce 2000.* Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute.

[9] Nord, Mark and John Cromartie. 1999. "Rural Areas Attract Young Families and College Graduates." *Rural Conditions and Trends 9(2)*: 28-34.



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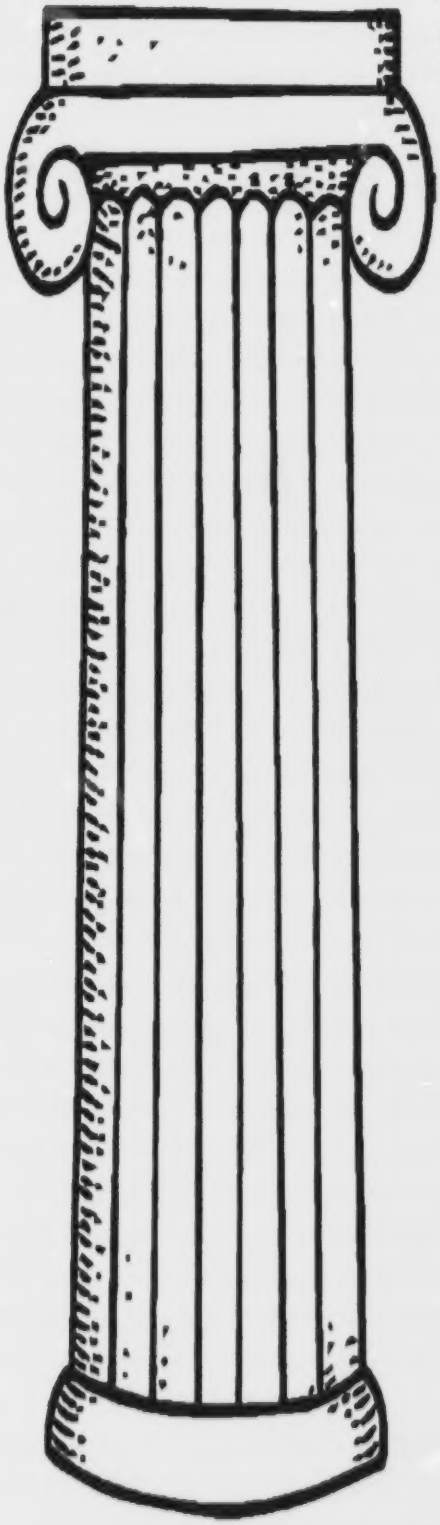

Community Choices

Public Policy Education Program

Module One

Public Policy Education Model

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February 2000

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Module One Instructor's Guide

The Public Policy Education Model

Objectives

After completing this module, participants will be able to do the following:

- Determine the meaning of public policy education;
- Know the criteria for assessing which issues can be characterized as public policy issues; and
- Understand and use the public policy education model for addressing issues of local importance.

Procedures And Timeline

- This brief discussion provides an ideal setting for informing your audience of what is meant by public policy education. In general, such education reflects an effort to address problems/issues that are controversial and that require some kind of public policy intervention to resolve. Discuss how values and conflicts are a natural part of public policy decisions. You might want to ask participants to share examples of how people's values affect how they look at a public policy issue, for example, economic development, environmental preservation and educational funding.

- Briefly present the eight steps involved in the public policy education framework. The key aspects of this model are threefold
  - the identification of important issues in the community,
  - an exploration of the policy alternatives that might be developed to address these issues, and
  - the careful consideration of the consequences that could result if specific alternatives were put in motion.

- For the rest of the program, split your participants into small groups (depending on the number of participants). Normally, groups of five to eight people are sufficient. Give them the activity sheet

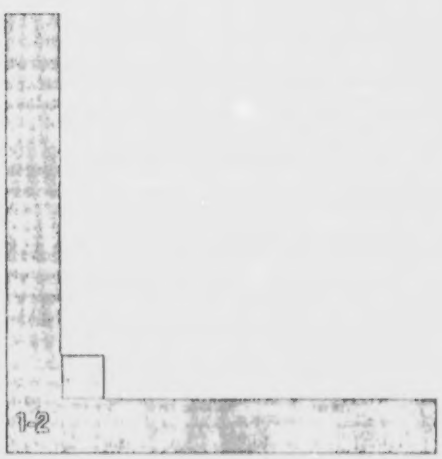
titled *Exploring Public Policy Issues*, which is designed to give each group an opportunity to apply the Public Policy Education Model to an issue of their choice. Select a member of each group to summarize the group's work and present it to all participants at the last phase of the workshop. Allow about 45 to 60 minutes to complete this entire activity. After the small group presentations are finished, begin an open discussion with participants as a means of generating additional thoughts about the group presentations or the entire session.

Materials

- Microsoft PowerPoint
- Copies of *The Public Policy Module: A Framework for Addressing Local Issues* and the *Exploring Public Policy Issues* activity sheets to distribute to each participant; and
- Newsprint pads or overhead transparencies and markers for the small group presentations.

Going Further—
Things For Participants To Do

- Have each participant interview three to five local people who are knowledgeable about issues in the community. The participants should have them identify some of the important policy issues in the community. Have participants report and discuss with other participants the importance of their findings at the next meeting.
- Ask participants to read the local newspaper for one week and have them identify public policy issues discussed in the newspaper. If possible, have them identify the positions presented for dealing with these issues. Have participants share their reports with the other participants at the next meeting.



The Public Policy Education Model:
A Framework for Addressing Local Issue

Lionel J. Beaulieu
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Introduction

A community is often defined as the interaction of people or groups of people who live within some geographic area that provides for most of their daily needs and who share certain values and meanings about their common life situation. Further, these individuals work together to address local problems, concerns, and opportunities.

Most communities, regardless of size, find themselves confronted with a host of issues that require tough choices. How can communities begin to understand the connection between human capital resources and local economic development? Should priority attention be given to the community residents' education and job training? Should priority be given to the community's ability to attract new industries and promote economic development? Or do both need to be examined simultaneously? Indeed, as difficult as this question may seem, even more complicated is the process of securing public agreement on these priorities? Why? Because in nearly all communities, the needs of local residents are diverse. These multiple needs make arriving at community consensus on local priorities a difficult task at best. Let's face it—people and groups have different interests, interests that make competition and conflict an ever-present part of decision-making activities at the local level.

Our intent in this brief document is to outline a framework that offers local people a way to take stock of the important policy issues that can affect the relationship between human capital investment and economic development in their community. Furthermore, it presents a mechanism for outlining a set of agreed upon strategies to address these issues. An important aspect of this process is to ensure that these decisions are guided by facts that allow community residents to arrive at more informed decisions on policy choices. County and state Extension faculty who are part of the *Community Choices* public policy education program in their community serve as key resources for securing such facts.

"Public policy helps citizens participate in the democratic process for those policy matters about which they care deeply."

The foundation for the Community Choices public policy education model is threefold:

- Give citizens an increased understanding of important policy issues facing their community;
- Stimulate citizens' interest and involvement in helping shape local policy decisions; and
- Bring about an enhanced capacity for the community to arrive at key policy decisions through an active involvement of people who represent the variety of interests in the community.

"Values affect how people think of problems and the policy strategies they feel would best solve these concerns."

Key Terms

To make sure that we have a common understanding of public policy education, here are a few definitions to help clarify what some of the key words mean:

- **Policy**—An agreed upon course of action, guiding principle, or procedure considered to be expedient, prudent, or advantageous.
- **Public Policy**—A designated course of action adopted by a governmental entity and followed by the public to resolve an issue of public concern [3,9].
- **Education**—The process of imparting information and technical assistance to individuals, groups, and communities to enhance their capacity to address and resolve problems of local importance.
- **Public Policy Education**—An educational program provided by many state land-grant institutions (especially the Cooperative Extension

As Flinchbaugh [5] notes, public policy issues can be characterized as follows:

- They involve problems that require a group decision;
- Solutions to the problems are based on value judgements;
- The issues are of broad interest and concern;
- They deal with controversial matters; and
- The issues tend to be recognized by decision-makers as a problem.

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Service system). This program applies the university's knowledge to public issues—knowledge that enables citizens to make more informed policy choices.

A key word that must be highlighted is the "public" dimension of public policy education. Our concern is not with decisions that are private or personal in nature, but rather with those that necessitate some kind of public intervention [9].

An issue that meets these criteria is generally considered to be a matter worthy of public attention and debate.

Values and Conflicts

Of the five characteristics of public policy issues listed above, two deserve additional comment—values and conflicts. Both are part and parcel of any public policy issue, so it's critical for people to be prepared to effectively deal with them. According to Barrows [1], public policy involves questions and decisions over which there are conflicts and disagreements. In fact, if controversy does not exist, there is no public policy issue.

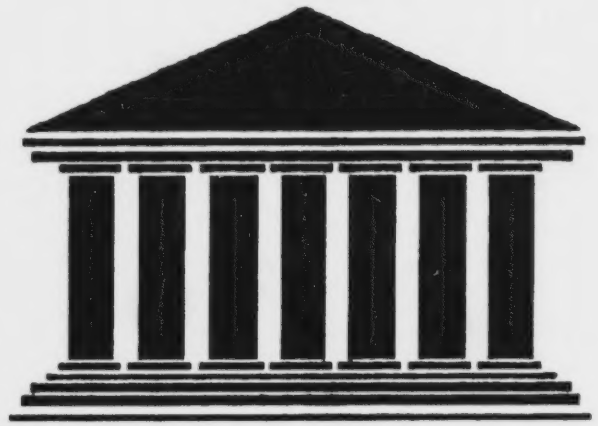
Underlying many policy debates are values. Values are people's views of what should be or what the desirable situation ought to be. They are a person's perception of what is "good" and "bad" [4]. Values affect how people think of problems and the policy strategies they feel would best solve these concerns. Because people discuss public policy issues with different sets of values, conflicts naturally arise. The goal is to compromise, to reach policy decisions that all interested parties can endorse [8].

"The Public Policy Education Model is designed to walk you through a series of logical steps to arrive at solutions that hold promise in helping solve the policy issues under discussion."

A personal experience from a few years ago serves as a vivid reminder of how we operate with different value systems. I was asked to present a program about population changes that took place in the county over the last 10 years to a group of local leaders in a small, rural county. While studying the county population data, I was struck by the limited growth in the county's population during the decade—a stark contrast to the trends uncovered in most other counties in the state. Without much thought, I stated during my presentation that the county underwent *only* a small proportional growth in its population over the 10-year period. Soon after I made this point, an elder gentleman in the audience raised his voice in protest. He pointed out that, to many people in the county, no growth was just fine because it meant very few outsiders would be moving into their area. That episode helped remind me that not all people see issues in quite the same light. Indeed, people's values do differ, which is something that must be recognized when dealing with public policy issues.

As you can see, although informed decisions should be guided by facts, values also come into play in all policy decisions.

Figure 1. The Public Policy Education Model



1. Concerns

- What are people's concerns?
- Do these concerns involve policy issues?
- Are there debates about these issues?

2. Involvement

- What individuals and/or groups are affected and could get involved?
- What decision-makers should be contacted?

3. Issue Clarification

- Are the issues truly problems or only symptoms?
- What do the facts seem to indicate?
- Which of the issues should be given priority attention?

4. Alternatives

- What are the alternative strategies for pursuing the goals?
- Does objective information exist about the alternatives?
- Have the views of all sides in the policy debate been considered?

5. Consequences

- What are the likely consequences of each alternative?
- Who will benefit from the various alternatives and who will not?
- Does research-based information exist on the consequences of each?

6. Choices

- What strategy, given people's values and judgments, should be supported?
- Is it best to maintain the status quo? Why?

7. Implementation

- What individuals and/or groups should be informed of this decision?
- What "plan of action" is to be carried out?

8. Evaluation

- Did the alternative achieve the goals?
- What benefits/disadvantages have emerged?
- Are refinements in the policy needed?

Source: House [11] and Hahn [6].

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Program participants should remember and be continuously aware of the tension between "facts" and "values" in their community and realize the importance of compromise in generating workable solutions to existing problems.

The Public Policy Education Model

As you study local human capital and economic development concerns, and seek to find ways to solve these problems, it is helpful to have a framework to guide your activities. The *Public Policy Education Model* presented in Figure 1 is designed to walk you through a series of logical steps to arrive at solutions that hold promise in helping solve the policy issues under discussion. As the model shows, the initial phase of the public policy education program involves exploring *concerns*. The intent is to discover what problems and issues are on people's minds. But remember, these issues must have policy dimensions to them—differences and conflicts about how to deal with these problems.

After you generate a list of issues, begin to think about the group of people and organizations in the community who also see these issues as problems. You should identify people and groups who may be willing to assist in getting these issues resolved (see Module Two). This is the *involvement* phase of public policy education. It might be useful to touch base, at least informally, with decision-makers who could help get the problem addressed.

"Finding answers to the tough issues facing communities requires careful thought, study, and debate among all affected parties."

Next, *clarify the issues* that have been identified so as to get to the causes of the problems outlined. Is the issue truly a problem, or only a symptom of a more deeply-rooted problem? Getting sound, research-based information/facts on these issues can be beneficial. After careful study of the information, a decision has to be made about which issues should be given priority. When that process has been completed, you begin the difficult task of exploring *alternatives* for solving the problem. This involves specifying what goal is being sought; that is, what should the situation be with respect to this issue? What goal are we hoping to attain? With a goal in mind, you are in a better position to explore alternative strategies that are better aligned with the goals being pursed. Also, determine whether the views of all sides in the policy debate have been considered. Remember, determining alternatives will involve value judgments, so be prepared for disagreements.

Assessing the *consequences* of each alternative under discussion is critical. Taking the time to understand the potential consequences of each strategy can help you make sound choices from the alternatives. Know that in any policy decision, some people benefit and some do not. It is important to try to think as much as possible about these impacts before deciding on a strategy. One useful source may be research reports that have investigated outcomes from some of the policy options being considered.

Armed with a list of alternatives and a view of the likely consequences of these strategies, you must make a *choice* from the alternatives. Once again, value judgments enter into the picture and influence the choice. Remember that no solution is likely to be perfect. Why not? Simply because policy decisions represent compromises reached among individuals and groups who hold different views on the issue being addressed [8]. Keep in mind that doing nothing about the issue—that is, preserving the "status quo"—is a choice that some may want to embrace.

"Policy decisions represent compromises reached among individuals and groups who hold different views on the issues being addressed."

The *implementation* step of the *Public Policy Education Model* involves putting the selected policy solution into action. This involves touching base with individuals and groups who are likely to be affected by the policy decisions. Furthermore, a timetable for implementing the policy choices (and the resources needed to do so) should be outlined and put into effect at this stage.

An important step in the model is *evaluation*. This step is designed to assess how well the policy solution achieved its intended goals. Did those people for whom a policy was intended accrue any measurable benefit? Did any unanticipated problems emerge? Are refinements needed to make the policy more effective? These are some of the questions that deserve serious treatment. Evaluation can also be used to assess what went right or wrong during each step of the public policy education process.

Concluding Remarks

Today's communities are confronted with a host of problems. While solutions to some of these problems may be clear-cut, most are not. Finding answers to the tough issues facing communities requires careful thought , study, and debate among all affected parties. The *Public Policy Education Model* presented in this document offers a useful framework for identifying local issues that require policy solutions—solutions that are arrived at through consensus among parties with different interests. The benefit of this model is that it works to ensure that alternatives for addressing the policy issues are explored fully and that the potential consequences of these strategies are considered. In the final analysis, the *Public Policy Education Model* serves as an important tool to help communities reach public policy decisions that enjoy the support of local residents—support that is realized as a result of the democratic process employed in arriving at workable solutions.

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"Know that in any policy decision, some people benefit and some do not."

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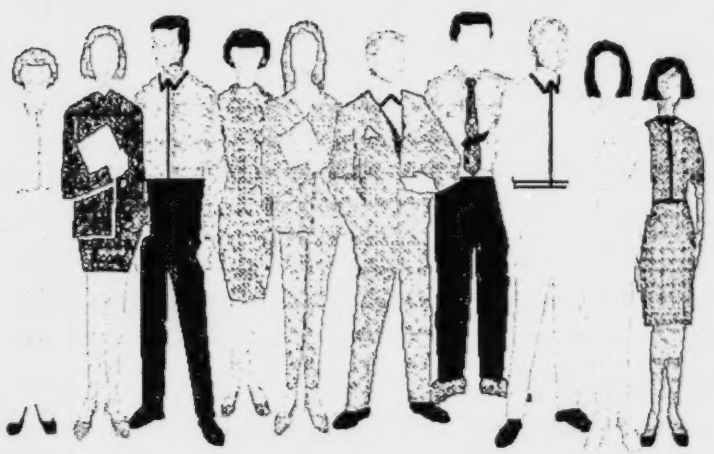
Module One Instructor's Guide

The Public Policy Education Program

Small Group Activities



Activity #1
Exploring Public Policy Issues

This activity lets you apply the *Public Policy Education Model* to a real-life issue in a community. While many issues will be proposed, it is recommended that your group select one issue to study in greater detail.

1. Begin by listing the issues that you, as an individual, feel are important public policy concerns facing your community. Remember, these must be issues over which there are conflicts and disagreements.

   a. _____ e. _____
   b. _____ f. _____
   c. _____ g. _____
   d. _____ h. _____

2. Each member of the group should share his/her list with the group. It would be a good idea to have someone from the group write all the proposed issues on a newsprint pad or blackboard. When everyone has shared his/her list, open the floor for discussion, elaboration, and debate. Your group should identify one issue to investigate further during the remainder of this activity. Write this issue on the top of the worksheet that is attached to this activity.

3. Try to determine what groups or individuals would think your issue is important. List them on the worksheet.

4. Work as a group to clarify the issue; consider whether the issue you have identified is really the problem or only a symptom of a deeper concern. If you find it is only a symptom, use the new information you have uncovered to restate you issue. What is the root problem as you see it? Write this on the worksheet.

5. With your issue clearly identified, the next critical step is to agree on your goal(s). What does your group hope to achieve? For example, if the issue you are dealing with is the lack of summer employment opportunities for local teenagers, a goal you might aspire toward is creating 100 summer jobs for teens in that community. Having a goal identified is it gives you something concrete to work toward.

   As a group, come to some consensus on what your goal(s) will be for the issue you are dealing with. Write it (them) on the worksheet.

6. Individually, list some possible alternatives for dealing with your group's issue in the space provided below. Remember, these alternatives should be designed to help you achieve the goal(s) you outlined in No. 5 above.

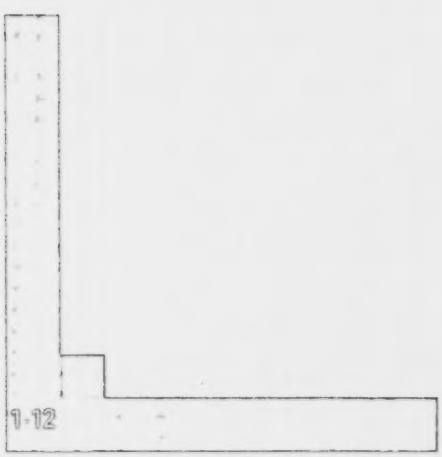
   a. _____ e. _____
   b. _____ f. _____
   c. _____ g. _____
   d. _____ h. _____

Each person should share his/her list of alternatives with the group. Have someone write these items on a newsprint pad or blackboard. Have group members clarify any alternatives they might have suggested or ask others to discuss in more detail alternatives they may have proposed to the group.

7. As a group, choose three to five alternatives that you think are likely to be effective and achievable. Write these alternatives on the accompanying worksheet.

8. For each alternative listed, assess what its potential consequences might be. What is likely to happen if this alternative is carried out? Will certain people benefit? Will some people be affected negatively as a result of this alternative? As a group, list these possible consequences on the worksheet.

9. If time permits, be prepared to provide a brief report of your activities to the entire group of people involved in this session.



Activity #1
Worksheet

1. Issue

_____

_____

2. Potential Groups or Individuals to Be Involved/Interested

a. _____ e. _____

b. _____ f. _____

c. _____ g. _____

d. _____ h. _____

3. Restate Issue (If Needed)

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Your Group's Goal (s)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Alternatives Selected

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. Consequences of Each Alternative

Alternative 1

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

Alternative 2

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

Alternative 3

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

Alternative 4

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

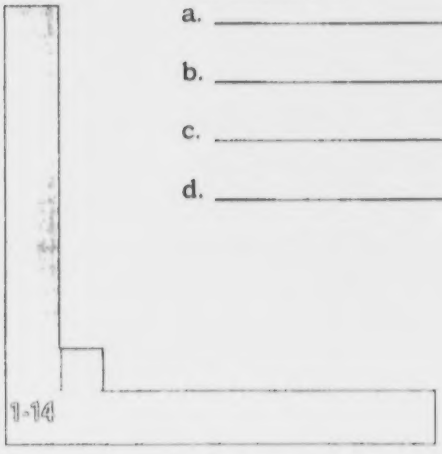
Alternative 5

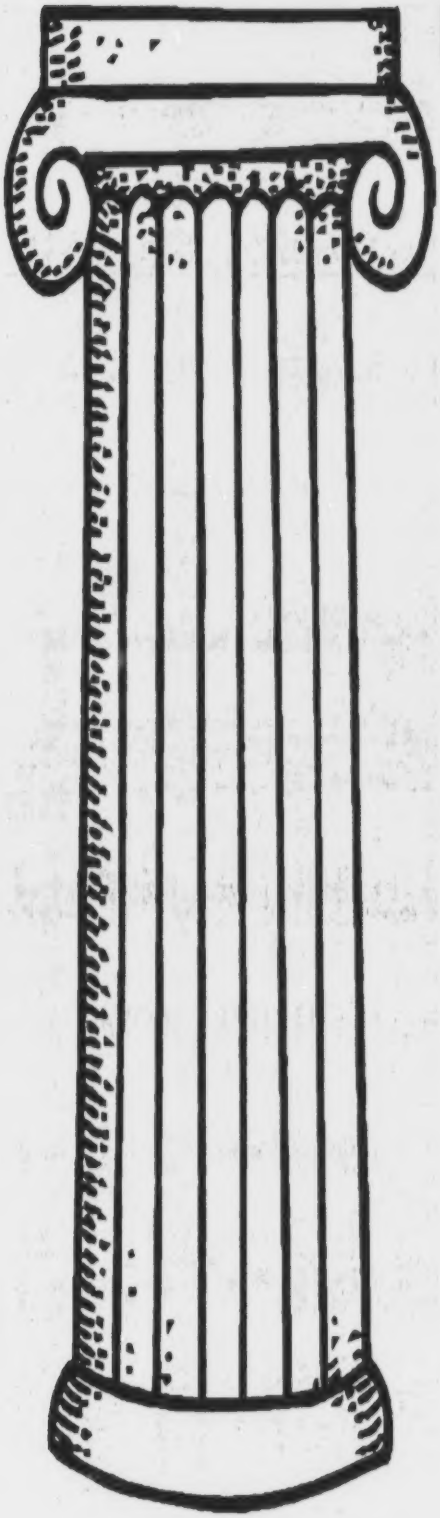
a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____





Community Choices

Public Policy Education Program

Module Two

Identifying Local Decision-Makers

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February 2000

SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER
SRDC

The Southern Rural Development Center is one of four USDA-sponsored regional centers in the nation. The Center coordinates rural development research and extension (education) programs cooperatively with the 29 land-grant institutions in the South. The Center supports and strengthens individual state efforts in rural areas by drawing upon multi-disciplinary networks of university research and extension land-grant faculty in the region. The center is cosponsored by Mississippi State University and Alcorn State University.

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Module Two Instructor's Guide

Identifying Local Decision-Makers

Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to do the following:

- Understand the U.S. system of government and the importance of local government;
- Assess the role of social stratification in shaping local involvement;
- Understand the levels of influence in the community and apply techniques designed to identify these influential leaders; and
- Gain a greater sensitivity about the importance of including members of the community who are often not heard in local public policy deliberations.

Procdeures and Timeline:

- The first portion of this session should present the key information in the overview document, *Identifying Local Decision-Makers: Expanding Citizen Involvement in the Public Policy Process*. To avoid presenting a formal lecture on this topic, involve participants in your presentation as much as possible. For example, when discussing levels of leadership and influence in the community, ask participants to offer their views on who is influential in local issues and policy activities and why. Use this type of group discussion as a bridge to present the leadership pyramid (Figure 1). Do all that you can to invite discussion and debate throughout the presentation of the overview. Spend 30 to 40 minutes on the overview.

- Let the participants systematically assess who the influential leaders are in their community by doing Activity #1. To get all participants involved, divide them into groups of 5 to 7. Have each group select someone to give a brief summary of the group's discussion and decisions. Plan 40 minutes for this activity.

- For the final 50 to 60 minutes of this session, ask each of the small groups to do Activity #2. The issue of "school choice" is a very timely and controversial issue and is an excellent example of a public policy issue that deserves discussion at the local community

level; however, the key matter you want participants to consider is what the implications of such a policy would be on various individuals and groups in the community.

Materials Needed

- Overhead projector;
- Newsprint pad and markers, clean overhead transparencies, or both for discussion groups to use;
- Copies of the *Identifying Local Decision-Makers* overview document; and
- Activity # 1 (*Approaches for Identifying Community Leaders)* and Activity #2 (*School Choice: Exploring Its Impact on People in the Community*).

Going Further... Things For Participants To Do

- Conduct a more formal assessment of the leadership and influence structure of the community. Contact knowledgeable community members and ask for their input on who the key decision-makers are in the community.
- Identify recent public policy decisions and explore who the central players in the issue were. Were the various socioeconomic strata of the community represented? Were some individuals/groups beneficiaries of this decision? Were any groups or individuals likely to be impacted in a negative way as a result of this decision?

Identifying Local Decision-Makers: Expanding Citizen Involvement in the Public Policy Process

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Preface

The previous module presented the public education model as a useful framework designed to walk program participants through a series of steps to arrive at solutions, through consensus, that hold promise in helping solve important local policy issues. It can be viewed as a tool in the decision-making process. This module will allow program participants to focus on the **involvement** phase of public policy education; to identify people and processes in their community that make and implement policy decisions. These individuals will be the ones who will, through their leadership roles, have an effect on getting issues resolved that address economic development and its relationship to human capital investment.

"As you think about policy, it's more important to recognize that, in many cases, certain people are more successful in affecting policy decisions than are others."

Introduction

We have emphasized that individuals in a community work together to address local problems, concerns, and opportunities. But how does this process really unfold in your community?

In fact, the most disturbing aspect of the leadership and influence structure found in many communities is that a sizable number of people—the general public—take little, if any, active part in local decisions. This module is designed to foster an understanding of who makes decisions, and how these decisions are made. Furthermore, it invites a broader segment of the local community to be better informed about important local matters and to take an active part in helping shape responses to these issues.

This overview will briefly describe the United States' system of government as one that places great importance on local decision-making activities. It also will explain how, despite this assigned importance, access to and participation in the policy-making process is not equally available to all citizens of a community. It will then discuss, in greater detail, the influence that people at different levels of leadership have on local policies, focusing on who makes the policy decisions and how they are implemented. It will conclude by arguing for the increased need and commitment to

engage more citizens in policy discussions that address issues of importance to people in the community.

Understanding the U.S. System of Government

If you were to examine the way our system of government is organized in the United States, you would begin to truly appreciate the significant importance that the system places on local decisions arrived at by an active citizenry. The United States has a *federal system* of government in which power and responsibility are shared among the national, state, and local jurisdictions. The functions and powers of government are divided between the national and the state governments. The governing powers of townships, municipalities, and counties are granted by the states, and in many cases, the local governmental units function as administrative units of the states.

"Various types of social differences lead to social stratification— a ranking process that assigns gradations of higher or lower values to individual characteristics."

While it is true that there is often more interest in the big happenings at the state and national levels, local government is every bit as important in its own sphere. As one author has stated so well:

> Local governing agencies exert great influence on the way we live. They are the dominant level of government within our federal sphere in such matters as the exercise of police power, public education below the college level, recreation, regulation of land use, and such unglamourous yet essential services, as waste disposal [1].

Furthermore, local government is the only echelon of our national system on which most of us can feel any direct influence or personal identity—except during moments of patriotic drama. The nation, the states, even most of the counties, are sprawling conglomerates in which most individuals can function only as minute statistics—barely affecting the averages, trends, and probabilities on which governing decisions are based.

In essence, our unique system of government calls for citizens to take an active part in decision-making. And the chance to be a "part of the action" is most readily available at the local level.

However, there are certain factors that serve as barriers to participation in local issues. A brief discussion of social differences can begin to offer us some understanding of what these potential forces might be.

Social Stratification

An important American ideal is that *all people are created equal.* This implies that, naturally, we all have the same ability to become involved and influence policy. However, social differences among people arise and exert direct and indirect effects on who has the influence to impact the policy-

making process. As Swanson and his associates have noted:

> In the end, we do not all partake or benefit equally in the opportunities of this country. The hard reality is that the cards are stacked against some groups and individuals. The belief in equal opportunity is not always translated into equal results. Differences in family education, income, occupational status, and other characteristics lead to social distinctions that shape the options and opportunities which each individual faces, regardless of the promises of the Declaration of Independence [2].

Various types of social differences lead to social stratification—a ranking process that assigns gradations of higher or lower values to individual characteristics. There are many items that can be used to rank people in a system of social stratification— race and gender, for example. For the most part, however, American social scientists agree that the most useful and powerful measure that is used to stratify people is **socioeconomic status** (or what is often simply called SES). Socioeconomic status represents a combined measure of the **income, education**, and **occupation** of individuals (or families). These factors tend to go together. People with high education usually have high status jobs that provide a good income for these individuals. Of course, the reverse tends to be true as well—people with low education have jobs which generally pay much less. Indeed, there are exceptions to this pattern, but this is usually how income, education and occupation tend to be connected.

People associated with different socioeconomic statuses have distinct interests, needs, and concerns that tend to affect how they view certain public policy issues. Social stratification has much to say about how a community might deal with key local matters and who ultimately will benefit from these decisions. For example, a downtown renewal project that renovates and converts some old apartment houses into condominiums will tend to benefit the developers and the community as a whole because of the introduction of higher income people into the area. But such a project may end up ignoring the interests of low-income people who live in these old housing complexes and who are likely to be displaced from the neighborhood (since they will be unlikely to pay the higher rents that these new condominiums will command).

Yet, the reality often differs from the ideal principles. In order to involve more community members in the policy deliberations that affect their lives, we must understand who usually makes local policy decisions.

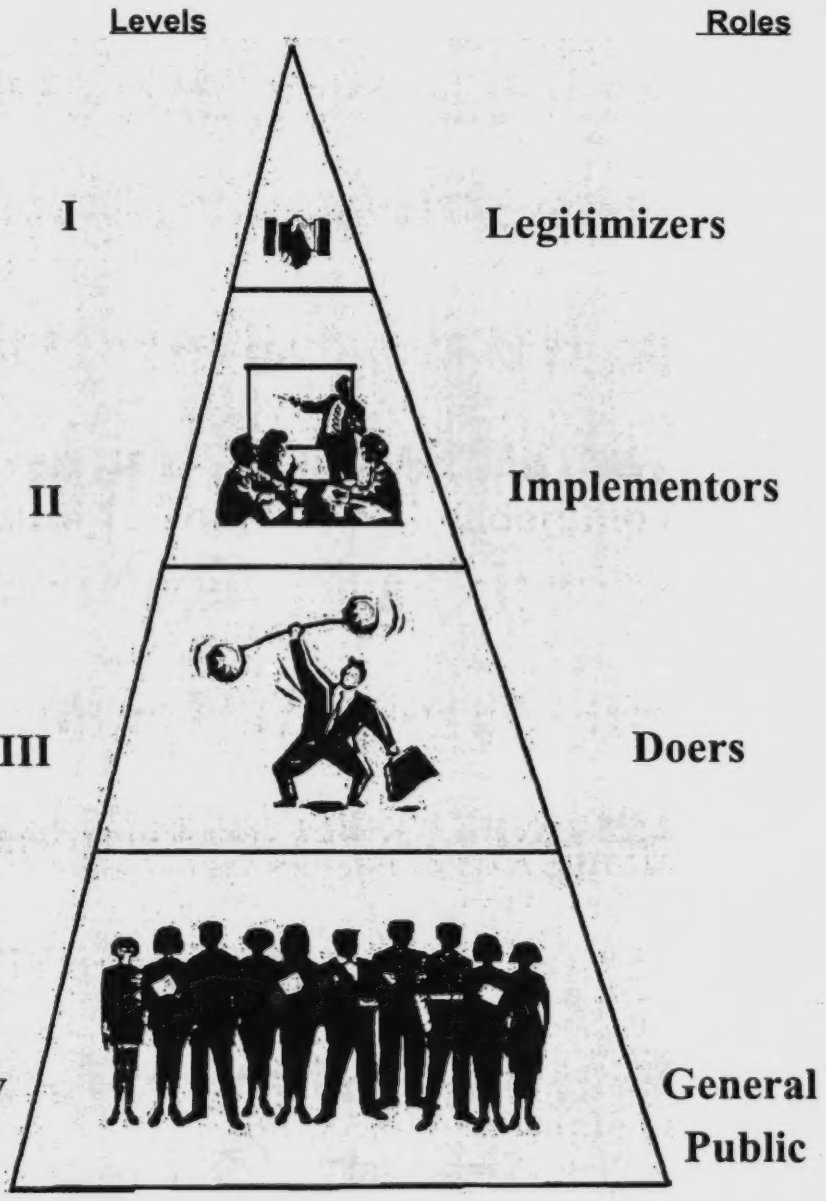
"The principal of equity and democracy suggest that the interests and concerns of all the members of the community should be considered when public decisions that have an effect on the community as a whole are to be made."

Levels of Local Leadership

In general, the level of influence that individuals have in local decisions is dependent upon where they are located in the local leadership hierarchy. Leadership in most communities forms a structure much like a pyramid. The leadership and influence that an individual provides is generally a function of that person's location in the leadership hierarchy.

Figure 1. Community Leadership Levels

"The use of a pyramid design to visually portray leadership and influence on the local level is no accident."



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The four levels of leadership can be categorized as *legitimizers, implementors, doers,* and the *general public* (see Figure 1). It is the *legitimizers* who are positioned at the highest rung of the local leadership structure, while the general public is situated at the bottom level of the hierarchy. Let's describe each of these leadership levels in greater detail.

Legitimizers, as the name implies, refers to those individuals in the community who provide the approval necessary to guarantee the success of important undertakings. In most instances, their efforts are addressed to projects having important policy implications for the community. Though they may not become actively involved in all community issues or concerns, their endorsement is often essential if groups or individuals hope to be successful in accomplishing the goals and objectives of their local projects.

In many instances, you will find that these top community influential are employed in important positions within the business, industrial, financial and governmental sectors of the community. Their influence is, in no small measure, due to the tremendous human, physical and financial resources which they control or have access to. These resources can be used to guarantee or thwart the success of many local projects or policy issues.

"Individuals who perform active decision-making roles in local projects are part of the communitity's leadership structure."

Implementors, who form the second level of leadership in a community, are the more active participants in community projects. Their involvement is often limited to areas in which they possess technical and/or professional competencies. Their key function is to implement the plans and decisions arrived at or approved by the *legitimizers.* Given their active involvement in local projects, they tend to acquire high visibility in the eyes of most community residents.

The third leadership level in the community is that of the *doers.* They perform many of the chores associated with a project, such as stuffing envelopes, making and answering phone calls, distributing information, and rallying support of local residents behind the project. Though they are seldom involved in the planning and decision-making phases of a project, they perform a key role by ensuring that all tasks are carried out. In most cases, individuals active in community clubs and civic and service organizations are a part of this third leadership level.

Finally, we have the general public. In most cases, they remain removed from active involvement in local leadership activities. Nonetheless, they do constitute an important aspect of the locality that must be given due consideration in important decisions, particularly those directly affecting them. The general public includes both a fairly sizable number of people who never become involved in public issues, and another segment that will be involved on an occasional basis, especially if issues or policies directly affecting them are being considered.

The use of a pyramid design to visually portray leadership and

influence on the local level is no accident. The pyramid suggests that the most influential level—*legitimizers*—is made up of a small number of people in the community. Implementors are more numerous than *legitimizers*, but less so than the doers. And finally, the general public is the largest group in the pyramid, but the one that is least actively involved in local policy decisions and as a result, often less instrumental in helping influence or guide local policy deliberations.

"There are two techniques that social scientist have used quite successfully in determining who the local *legitimizers* might be—the **"Positional"** and the **"Reputational"** techniques."

Locating Local Influentials

There are approaches that can be used to gain some idea of who might be located in the different influence levels in the leadership hierarchy (see Activity #1). There are two techniques that social scientists have used quite successfully in determining who the local *legitimizers* might be. These approaches are called the ***"Positional"*** and ***"Reputational"*** techniques.

The idea behind the *"Positional"* approach is that individuals who occupy the top spots in the major organizations of the community are the local leaders. Their key roles in the various organizations provide them with access to important resources which they can mobilize and bring to bear on any community project or important policy issue.

A second approach that is useful for uncovering the list of *legitimizers* in a community is called the *"Reputational"* technique. This method begins with the assumption that those individuals who have the "*reputation*" for power constitute the community's leadership structure.

List the names of individuals nominated on a notepad and tabulate the total number of times each individual's name is mentioned. The persons receiving the greatest number of nominations are often viewed as the community leaders and part of the group of local legitimizers.

The *"Decisional"* approach tends to be the most helpful method for determining who the implementors are in the community. This approach assumes that active participation in community projects or issues is leadership. Therefore, individuals who perform active decision-making roles in local projects are part of the community's leadership structure.

Finally, the *"Social Activity"* procedure tends to be effective in tapping the so-called doers of the community. This approach focuses specifically on those individuals who are active and who hold office in local clubs, voluntary and civic/service organizations in the area. These people tend to be the ones who are willing to take on the multiple and time-consuming

tasks associated with getting projects off the ground or helping to better inform the community of important problems or policy issues.

It's important to point out that if the community you are interested in tends to be moderate to large in population size, it is likely that the distinct leadership levels shown in Figure 1 will be occupied by different people. In smaller communities, on the other hand, the same group of people will likely carry out multiple leadership roles, such as *legitimizers* and *implementors*. This is because fewer persons tend to be available to fill the various leadership roles. So, the same individuals tend to appear frequently on more than one of the leadership levels presented in Figure 1.

Expanding the Breadth of Local Participation

Public policy education has as its very foundation the value of public participation in governmental decisions. It is assumed that if the democratic system is to function effectively, the citizenry must be well-informed of the major issues of the day, and must have the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. This is no less true in the local community than in national affairs. No doubt, an array of community problems clamor for attention including those that deal with economic development issues. Expanding the participation of local citizens in addressing these important local issues is of paramount importance.

In this module, we have described the people who tend to be influential in deciding important policy issues. We have noted that many people remain uninterested or uninvolved in local matters. In some cases, the socioeconomic status of people often limit their access to the decision-making process. As public policy issues are debated, it is important to remain sensitive to the fact that probably not all perspectives or voices are being heard. In order to ensure fairness and equity at the local level with regard to public policy activities, the public policy education participants must make every effort to recruit and involve people of racial/ethnic diversity or of lower socioeconomic standings. Their interests and concerns cannot be ignored or dismissed.

Granted, *legitimizers* and *implementors* will continue to command influence in deciding important policy matters. This does not mean, however, that the common citizen is powerless. Organizing as a group to understand the policy issues, and working together to help shape the strategies for responding to these issues, represents a valuable mechanism for ensuring that they will be heard. Ten people working together in cooperation to achieve a common goal can accomplish more than 10 people working separate from one another. By organizing, you

magnify the power and influence of individuals. In fact, forming an organization to deal with an issue of concern will strengthen the group's capacity to influence public policy in the following ways:

- A division of labor can take place that will allow your group to take advantage of the special skills and talents of the various members of the group.
- Establishing an organization will increase the public's awareness of the issue and goals being promoted by your group. For example, the local news media are more likely to give attention to the public policy recommendations of a citizens' organization than they would to a "Letter to the Editor" prepared by an individual.
- Local influential leaders are more likely to take the effort seriously since the concern is being expressed by a group of local residents.
- Working as a group gives each individual a sense of confidence in his/her ability to make positive changes in the community. The person begins to feel empowered.
- Working in a mutual effort with others in a group can, to some extent, make up for economic and social disadvantages that one may have due to income, occupational, educational, or minority racial/ethnic status.

Concluding Comments

This overview has built on the public policy education model's **involvement** phase by emphasizing the importance of understanding how local decisions are made and identifying who is involved in these activities. This base information will be useful later on in this program, when participants examine specific community economic development issues and seek to expand the people and groups who are engaged in discussing and shaping policy recommendations.

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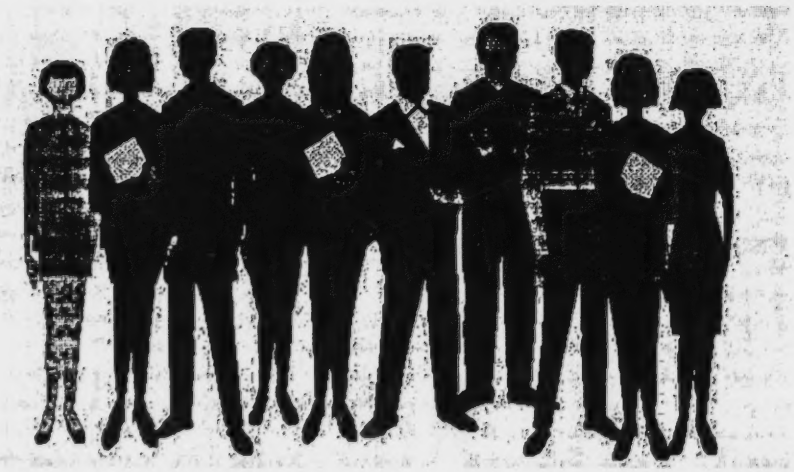
Module Two Instructor's Guide

Identifying Local Decision-Makers

Small Group Activities



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Activity #1
Approaches For Identifying Community Leaders

In this session, we discussed the importance of being aware of how local decisions are made. Where a person is located in the leadership hierarchy has much to do with how influential that person might be in affecting local policy decisions.

Think about the leadership structure of your community. Who do you think are the local *legitimizers* and *implementors*? To help develop a list of possible *influentials*, use the three approaches below (that is, the *positional*, the *reputational*, and the *decisional*) to generate names of individuals. Work on the list in small groups.

1. The Positional Approach

Use the following guideline to identify individuals in your community who are viewed as positional leaders. Remember that the list you generate is generally considered to be people who serve as local *legitimizers*.

- Identify those persons who occupy the top formal positions or offices in the public and private sectors of your community. Some of these formal positions include the mayor or city manager, city or county commissioners, key business people, bank officers, and others who hold important positions in government, business, industry, and finance.
- List these names on the attached sheet.

As you compile the list, pay special attention to whether there is much overlap among names. That is, if one or more persons hold several leadership positions across these different types of firms, this may be an indication of an ***elite*** or ***clique*** leadership structure. This may suggest that a small group of people dominate community decision-making. If such overlap is rare, this suggests that a pluralistic pattern might predominate, one in which a wider range of people are giving leadership to those issues deemed critical to the economic and social health of the community. Discuss the meaning of your findings.

2. Reputational Approach

This method focuses on those persons who have the "reputation" for being influential on important local issues. This method also helps identify community legitimizers.

- Have each member of your group identify 5 to 10 people in the community who come to mind in response to the following questions: "Who has the most influence in your community in deciding important matters facing it?" and "Whose support would you like to have if you

wanted to propose something new for the community?"

- List these names of the individuals nominated on the attached sheet and tabulate the total number of times each individual's name is mentioned. The persons receiving the greatest number of nominations are often viewed as the community leaders and part to the group of local ***legitimizers***.

3. Decisional Approach

This approach suggests that active participation in important community projects or issues indicates a person with influence in local matters. As a technique, it tends to be successful in identifying community *implementors*. See if you can list some of the people in your community who are *implementors*.

- Identify the significant local projects, issues, or policy decisions that have been addressed in the past 2 to 3 years or the 3 to 4 key issues with which your community is currently dealing. Now, determine the persons that have been significantly involved in one or more of these issues. If you have access to newspaper accounts of these activities, it can prove quite helpful in identifying active participants.
- List these names on the attached sheet. The names that are generated through this process are ones that are commonly viewed as community ***implementors***.

4. The Social Activity Approach

This method is effective in identifying individuals who are the doers in the community. It focuses specifically on those individuals who are willing to take on multiple and time-consuming tasks associated with getting projects off the ground or helping to better inform the community of important problems or policy issues.

- Have group members identify those persons who they know are active in community activities such as local clubs, voluntary and civic/service organizations or who they know can be counted on to become involved in community issues.
- List the names of the individuals nominated on the attached sheet and tabulate the total number of times each individual's name is mentioned. The persons receiving the greatest number of nominations are often viewed as the community ***doers***.

Discussion Questions

1. To what extent are the same names being uncovered using the three different techniques? Do the positional and reputational methods tend to have considerable or only minor overlap in names? Are some people that you have identified as legitimizers also viewed as implementors?
2. Do you think that knowing who the local legitimizers and implementors are can be helpful to individuals or groups who are trying to help shape local policy decisions? Why or why not?

Community Leadership Worksheet
Activity #1

	Leadership Approach	Names Identified
Positional Technique		
Reputational Technique		

Community Leadership Worksheet
Activity #1

	Leadership Approach	Names Identified
Decisional Technique		
Social Activity Technique		

Activity #2
School Choice: Exploring Its Impact On People in the Community

1. Assume that th following represents an actual event that is taking place in your community.

   In respones to a call by the State Department of Education to improve the quality of the state's primary and secondary school systems, a proposal has been made to introduce "choice in education." Under the proposal, parents could choose which school to send their children. Those schools doing a better job of educating their students would attract more students, thlus rewarding ther more innovative, hard working schools. Because school funding i based on student attendance, the better schools would be reinforced in thier practices by recieving more money. The resulting competition among schools, it is argued, will improve the overall quality of education.

2. In the basis of what you have heard and discussed during the session on "How Local Decisions are Made," how do you thing the proposed public policy change concerning the local school system will affedt your local community? Who is likely to support the effort and who is likely to be against it? Are there certain groups that you think will benefit or lose as a result of these proposed changes?

Think of your responses along these lines:

   a. On the basis of the leadership hierarchy portrayed in Figure 1 of the overview document on "How Local Decisions Are Made," who at each leadership level is likely to be involved in helping influence the outcome of this issue? For example, what legitimizers (if any) are likely to get involved? How about the imiplmentors?

   b. When considering your community's social stratification system, are there certian groups or individuals who would benifit if this proposal were approved? Are there individuals or groups that would benifit if this proposal were approved? Are there individuals or groups that would be impacted in negative ways? Why do you think so?

   c. What organizations or groups are likely to be in favor of this proposal? What groups/organizations are likely to oppose it? Why?

3. Meet in small groups (5 to7 people) to discuss this possible change in policy. As a group, address the questions that have been outlined for you to debate. As a group, identify other key points that would need to be considered if the "school choice" issue were to be considered for approval by people in your community.

4. Record the major points of your discussion on newsprint or an overhead transparency. Select a member of your group to share the highlights of your group's discussion with the rest of the sessions with the rest of the sessions participants.

Community Choices

Public Policy Education Program

Module Three

Promoting Multicultural Awareness

Kenneth Bolton Jr.
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University of Florida

February 2000

SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER
SRDC

Module Three Instructor's Guide

Promoting Multicultural Awareness

Objectives

After completing the workshop, participants will be able to do the following:

- Understand the definition of culture, racial group, stereotype and prejudice;
- Recognize how perceptions and stereotypes can influence participants in the public policy process;
- Recognize how values that vary across cultures might cause issues to be viewed differently by various segments of the community; and
- Become aware of the cultural dimensions of public policy issues.

Preparation

- Read all the materials in the module. Become familiar with the contents of the overview paper and the activities. Develop an outline of how you will present the information and involve participants in the workshop.

- Collect data for your state, county, or community on the breakdown of racial and ethnic groups. Use the overview paper as a guide to identify the types of information that you might obtain to illustrate past and present relations between these different groups of people. Focus on locality-specific information that will increase interest and involvement by participants.

- Make sure that the proper equipment (flip charts, for example) and materials are ready for the workshop.

Procedures and Time Line

- Introduce topic using transparencies of the module's purpose and definitions (about 5 minutes).

- Conduct activity #1. The activity explores what groups live in the local community and how they came to live there.

- Introduce the terminology and discuss material from the module's overview. To avoid presenting a formal lecture on the topic, involve participants in the presentation as much as possible. Do all that you can to invite discussion and debate throughout the presentation of the overview.

- Conduct activity #2. The activity asks participants to examine how racial and cultural differences in their community might affect human resources and local economic development. It then asks participants to examine a policy issue that can be influenced by different cultural understandings and then identify policy alternatives that would involve all local cultural groups.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of activity response sheets for each participant.
- A flip chart or blackboard.

Going Further— Things For Participants To Do:

- Conduct a more formal assessment of differing cultural groups by inviting influential and/or knowledgeable members of these groups to speak with program participants. They could discuss the history of the group in the community and the needs and desires of the group's members. Further, they could respond to questions posed by the participants.
- Conduct a more formal assessment of differing cultural groups by having participants talk with the leadership (religious, political, economic) of these groups and discuss their findings with the other program participants.
- Determine the cultural breakdown of the program's participants and invite members of groups that may be absent to participate in the remainder of the program in order to include as many points of view as possible.
- Identify multicultural education programs in your community or locality and ask the instructor to loan materials to the group or to conduct a presentation in order to facilitate participants' understanding of the objectives of this type of educational program.

Cultural Diversity and Public Policy

Kenneth Bolton
Institution

John Rutledge
University of Florida

Preface

The first section of this program is designed to lay the foundation for doing public policy education work so participants can gradually examine various aspects of the human resources and economic development relationship in their communities. The first module introduced a useful model that can be applied to the analysis of issues of local importance. The second module offered a brief review of how local decisions are made. Module 3 ends the first section by examining the relationship between a community's cultural diversity and its public policy decisions. The intent is to sensitize program participants to the fact that local policy decisions must give attention to the variety of values and perspectives that exist along cultural lines.

Introduction

The United States is one of the most culturally diverse nations in the world and is becoming increasingly more so. The numbers and relative percentages of the population for African-Americans, Hispanics, and Asian-Americans are increasing. It is estimated that by the year 2050, the United States will be comprised of 52.5 percent whites, 22.5 percent Hispanics 14.4 percent African-Americans, and 9.7 percent Asians. How can such a variety of people learn to live in harmony with each other, let alone work together for the common good? Although this is a difficult question to answer, it seems clear that the future economic productivity of all Americans will depend not just on the talents and training of white children, but also on those of African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and American-Indian children.

"Perceived racial and cultural differences can promote ethnocentrism, prejudice, and stereotyping, all of which create intolerance that affects the outcome of public policy decisions."

This Community Choices module is designed to help participants:

- Become more aware of their own prejudices and use of stereotypes;
- Discuss how cultural differences and similarities might play a part in public policy decisions; and
- Gain insight into how those who wish to affect public policy

We begin by defining key concepts that will be used throughout the module. Next, we set the context for a brief discussion of the economic and educational realities of whites, African-Americans, and Hispanics by illustrating how these groups came to live where they currently reside. Finally, we discuss multicultural education as a means of better informing the

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public policy decision-making process. In doing so, we hope to continue the process of strengthening participants' understanding of the complex set of policy issues associated with their community's human capital resources and economic development options.

A Starting Point: Defining the Terms

Perceived racial and cultural differences can promote ethnocentrism, prejudice, and stereotyping, all of which create intolerance that affects the outcome of public policy decisions. This lack of intolerance for others can grow to the point where it negatively affects the ability of groups of people to adequately develop human capital—which can have devastating effects on the community's ability to grow and develop economically. Before examining this relationship further, let's define the terms we will be using.

"Cultural differences between groups are usually at the heart of racial and ethnic relations and conflict."

Most social scientists maintain that there is no distinctive biological reality called "race" that can be determined by objective scientific procedures. In fact, they argue that we must view race not as a given biological reality but as a socially constructed reality. A "**racial group**" can be defined, therefore, as a social group that people inside or outside the group have decided is important to single out as inferior or superior, typically on the basis of subjectively selected real or alleged physical characteristics. It is important to note that, with time, racial group definitions can change and even disappear.

An "**ethnic group**," on the other hand, can be defined as a group socially distinguished or set apart, by others or by itself, primarily on the basis of cultural or national-origin characteristics. Groups such as Irish- and Italian-Americans usually develop a strong sense of a common cultural heritage and ancestry.

Cultural differences between groups are usually at the heart of racial and ethnic relations and conflict. "**Culture**" has been defined as the shared values, understandings, symbols, and practices of a group of people. The shared symbols are the means by which people "communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life." Culture becomes a process by which groups adapt to each other. Groups can give up their cultural heritage almost entirely and adapt to another culture or, in the face of violence and oppression, cultures can transform to become a symbol of resistance by fostering a sense of pride and identity.

The separation of groups that foster a lack of understanding can be based in "**ethnocentrism**," the view of things in which ones' own group is the center of everything. It is characterized by a loyalty to the values, beliefs, and members of their own group and the prompting, often times, of negative views of other groups. These negative views are manifested in prejudices and stereotypes that influence the social, economic, and political interaction among groups.

"Prejudice" has evolved from meaning a judgment made prior to experience ("hasty judgment") to the present connotation of unfavorable bias based on an unsupported judgement. It may be felt or expressed. It may be directed toward a group as a whole, or toward an individual because he or she is a member of that group.

In printing, a stereotype is a metal plate that reproduces the same picture over and over. In thinking, a **"stereotype"** is a mental picture that overgeneralizes racial or ethnic group practices and behavior. It makes all people in a particular group look and act the same way. Stereotypes can cloud our judgement because they ignore the fact that no two human beings are identical. Stereotypes distort the truth. They suggest that all people in a particular group behave in the same way. They also suggest that only these people behave that way. Neither is true.

The root of many of these negative attitudes is fear based on ignorance about others and a lack of understanding about how much they are like us. There is a perceived risk involved in interacting with people from other cultures based on this lack of understanding. Overcoming this perceived risk and learning to understand others is essential if communities are to meet future challenges and develop socially and economically. We begin by examining how groups came to live where they are currently.

"Stereotypes can cloud our judgement because they ignore the fact that no two human beings are identical."

Background

The geographic concentrations of rural African-Americans and Hispanics have important implications for understanding the problems they face today and their prospects for the future. The geographic concentration of rural African-Americans in the South and rural Hispanics in the Southwest is no accident, but rather the result of historical patterns of economic development. For generations, rural African-Americans in the South worked in the region's cotton fields as tenant farmers, as sharecroppers, or as agricultural labors. When economic production was mechanized in the 1950s and 1960s, the main source of economic livelihood for millions of African-Americans disappeared.

On the other hand, rural Hispanics in the Southwest have come in waves from Mexico, especially after the Mexican Civil War in 1910. Often the only employment open to them was as agricultural workers. Like rural African-Americans, many rural Hispanics were able to eventually leave agricultural work and move to urban centers in the North. However, a residual of low-skilled, poorly educated Hispanics has remained in the rural Southwest.

Nearly 91 percent of all rural African-Americans reside in the South and more than half are found in the South Atlantic states. There are 276 counties in the South in which African-Americans account for 30 percent or more of the total population. Over 2.5 million of the five million rural Afri-

can-Americans live in these 276 counties [3]. Nearly half of all rural Hispanics live in the West and Mountain regions. The bulk of these are found in the Mountain states of Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado. Another 40 percent of the rural Hispanic population reside in the South, mainly Texas.

This module suggests that racially and ethnically linked economic inequalities in rural areas are , in part, because of the inability of African-Americans and Hispanics to secure good-paying jobs in the local economy because of a lack of understanding and tolerance for members of these groups. Though the roots of these differences are historically based, an examination of current conditions show little improvement, particularly in rural communities.

Current Conditions

"Together, manufacturing and service industries account for over 85 percent of all jobs held by African-American women."

Employment Opportunities

It is evident from information available that race and ethnicity are powerful determinants of job placement in rural areas. Looking at the makeup of the rural workforce, it is apparent that minority ethnic group members face more restricted occupational alternatives than do whites. Over 40 percent of rural African-Americans hold manufacturing jobs. Together, manufacturing and service industries account for over 85 percent of all jobs held by African-American women. Hispanic men and women alike are over represented in agriculture. In contrast, rural white men occupy the more favorable positions in the occupational structure. Nearly half hold professional, managerial, technical or skilled blue-collar jobs. Areas of the rural South with high concentrations of African-Americans remain saddled with an economic base dominated almost entirely by slow-growing, stagnating, or declining industries. Consequently, most occupational opportunities in the Black Belt are at the low-wage, low-skilled end of the job ladder. This means that many are subjected to low standards of living with their attendant implications for limited mobility and social acceptance [3].

Income

There are a number of important facts about the economic situation facing minorities in rural America today. First, African-American and Hispanic workers in rural areas earn less than their urban counterparts. Second, the income gap between rural workers and urban workers persist. Third, within rural areas, African-Americans and Hispanics are at the bottom of the economic ladder. Fourth, areas with large concentrations of African-Americans and Hispanics rank well below other nonmetropolitan counties on the income ladder [3].

One arena in which differences in economic well-being can be demonstrated by race and ethnicity is median household income (that level of income in which 50 percent of the households fall below and 50 percent place above the figure). In 1998, for example, rural African-American households had median incomes that were 63 percent that of white rural households. Hispanics fared better, garnering median household incomes

that were about 25 percent below that of rural white households [4]. Recent 1998 figures indicate that both African-American and Hispanic households are about three times more likely than white, non-Hispanic households to be living below the poverty line [5]. Two points stand out. First, African-Americans and Hispanics households, particularly those in rural areas, remain disproportionately concentrated in the lowest household income categories. Second, all rural households, regardless of race or ethnic background, continue to lag behind the income levels found in metro areas. In 1998, for example, the median household income of those in metro areas of the United States stood at $40,983, while in nonmetro areas, median household incomes reached $32,022, or 22 percent lower [4].

Educational Attainment

Though data show that the number of rural African-Americans and Hispanics with an eighth grade education or less has decreased substantially during the 1980s and 1990s, not only are there proportionately fewer rural whites with eight years of schooling or less, but there also are substantially more whites with college degrees. Historical inequalities seem bound to continue, in part, because one consequence of living in an economically depressed area is that local funds for schooling are more limited. Therefore, it is important to note that the socioeconomic climate of rural areas can have a detrimental effect on educational performance. Low income rural areas are unlikely to produce the level of human capital necessary to attract good jobs to the area. Conversely, the lack of desirable employment alternatives in poor areas forces the better educated African-Americans and Hispanics in these places to migrate to urban areas where their skills and abilities can be better compensated [3].

Programs/Policies

In the best of all worlds, the disadvantaged positions of rural African-Americans and Hispanics would become an issue of national concern and a federally directed and supported initiative would be launched to alleviate the inequalities that currently exist. However, times have changed since President Johnson declared his War on Poverty in the 1960s and the political mood has turned away from large-scale, federally sponsored programs to a belief that poverty and economic development are issues that are most appropriately addressed at the local level [3].

Addressing these important issues at the local level could be problematic, however, because perceiving members of other cultural groups based on a lack of information and understanding could interfere with the process of making or influencing public policy. Public policy education is based on a philosophical concept about the value of public participation in governmental decisions. It is assumed that if the democratic process is to function effectively, the citizenry must be well informed of the major issues of the day and everyone must have the opportunity to participate in the policymaking process.

"Citizens of all cultural backgrounds are important stakeholders and their input should be valued in every part of the process. Therefore, we introduce and promote the idea of multicultural education as a means of overcoming prejudice and fostering real, democratic policy decision-making processes."

The outcome of public policy will be better if the key stakeholders help define the issues, frame the problem, and help determine ways to address the problems. Citizens of all cultural backgrounds are important stakeholders and their input should be valued in every part of the process. Therefore, we introduce and promote the idea of multicultural education as a means of overcoming prejudice and fostering real, democratic policy decision-making processes.

Multicultural Education

Multiculturalism usually represents policies that take into consideration differences among groups that formerly were excluded from the mainstream of American society. Multicultural innovations, including educational programs, provide one way of dealing with the persistence of a dominant Anglo culture in an increasingly diverse society. The accent on the dominant Anglo culture tends to teach members of other racial and cultural groups that their own cultures are inferior and undesirable [2]. It also inhibits members of the dominant culture from grasping the complexity of values and beliefs in an ever changing world.

"Multicultural education is in the best American tradition of liberty and justice and can make available to our society a largely untapped reservoir of human talents and resources. This is more important today than ever."

Historically, every non-English group that entered this society was pressured or forced to give up its cultural practices and adapt to the dominant culture. We argue that in order for rural communities to advance, they must engage in clear discussions of the ways people of divergent cultural backgrounds develop and maintain their own social and cultural knowledge. Further, every racial and/or cultural group should be allowed to coexist with every other group and that there should be strong mutual respect for divergent cultural ways. We feel that this is a necessary position to take if groups of people are able to develop their human capital resources and apply them to the overall economic development of the community. If one group is held back and not allowed to participate, every group in the community will ultimately suffer the adverse consequences.

Multicultural education grew out of a civil rights movement grounded in such ideals of the West as freedom, justice, and equality. It generally promotes an understanding of both positive and negative features of American racial and cultural relations. Its goal is that students of all colors and cultures be given the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function effectively in a culturally and ethnically diverse state, nation, and world.

Multicultural education is in the best American tradition of liberty and justice and can make available to our society a largely untapped reservoir of human talents and resources. This is more important today than ever. Businesses in America trade with countries that encompass many different racial groups and nationalities. The prosperity of America, therefore, depends on the willingness and ability to understand and get along with diverse groups of people. A lack of knowledge about other people, cultures, and languages cripples many Americans who go abroad to conduct business or deal politically with people in other nations.

If multicultural education programs are well implemented, they represent a way to bring diverse people together in mutual respect for one another and for the equal rights and privileges promised by the Declaration

of Independence.

Conclusion

It is important that fear be set aside. Racial and cultural prejudices often come from ignorance about others and creates fear. Diverse groups of people can overcome that fear by focusing on those issues and values that they share.

A necessary ingredient is tolerance on the part of all participants. This, too, is easier said than accomplished. An attitude that is fair and objective toward those who have opinions, attitudes, values and practices different than one's own, while hard to achieve, is a worthy goal.

Becoming involved as citizens attempting to influence public policy can help us overcome some of the lack of understanding people have of diverse cultures. As was stated earlier, diverse groups of people can overcome their concentration on how they are different by focusing on those issues and values that they share in common and working together toward common goals. Upon achieving those goals, the fear of the unknown is replaced by a shared sense of accomplishment. Such an experience can aid in the acceptance that cultural diversity enriches a community, rather than detracts from it [3].

In conclusion, this module has attempted to promote multicultural awareness by first defining terms which are important to better understanding our feelings towards others. Next, historical and current conditions of the two largest minority cultural groups, African-Americans and Hispanics, were discussed to enhance our appreciation of how a lack of cultural awareness can lead to adverse consequences for members of those groups, and for the community's development goals as well.

Finally, multicultural education was introduced as an important part of public policy decision-making processes. An awareness of others who are "different" and their inclusion in decision-making activities improves their human capital resources and adds talent and creativity to the process of determining the community's economic future. This is especially important in today's uncertain and rapidly changing world.

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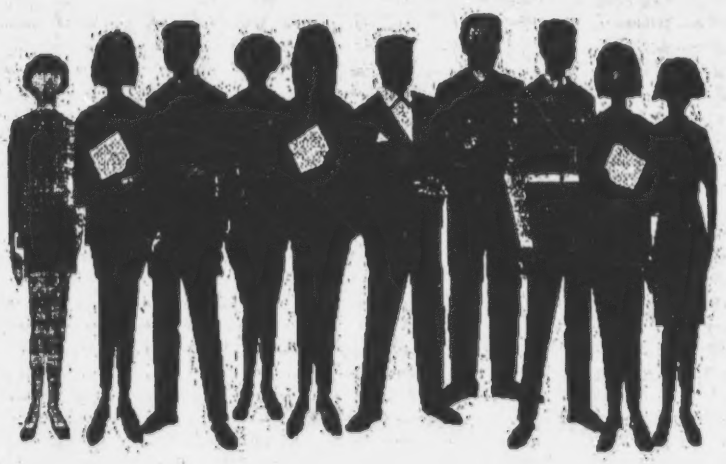
Module Three Instructor's Guide

Promoting Multicultural Awareness

Small Group Activities



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Identifying Your Community's Cultural Diverstiy

Activity #1

Time: 25 to 30 minutes

Materials Needed

- Flip chart
- Markers
- Masking tape

Purpose

- To introduce the idea of culture's connection to local human resources and economic development by exploring your local community's cultural diversity and history.

Procedures

- Introduce the activity. If the group is too large, break up into smaller groups of 4 to 5 people as warranted.
- Have each group address the questions below and record their answers on a flip chart for later discussion.
- After the task has been completed, have each group tape their sheet of paper on the wall for comparison and discussion. One member from each group should present their findings.

Introduction (Sample Script)

To understand how culture relates to the human resource base in our community, think about what groups live here, how long they have been here and what has been their contribution to the community's development. Let's take a few minutes to talk about who lives here, why and what difference they've made. Be sure to discuss and differentiate between all cultural groups that live here.

Discussion

Q. How many different cultural groups live in your community? List them and discuss what percentages of the population they make up.

Q. When and how did they come to be a part of the community? Discuss when they moved to the community and under what circumstances.

Q. What do you consider their descriptive characteristics to be? List those characteristics which make them different (language, occupations, etc.) and list those characteristics by which they are similar to the other groups (reli-

gion, political affiliation, etc.).

Q. What do you consider to be their contributions to the community?

Q. What do you consider to be unique conditions and/or problems they face?

Activity #2

Discussion (Part 1)

Q. What is the condition of the human resources of these different groups? Discuss the differences in human capital between the groups (education, income, family structure, etc.).

Q. How do you compare these groups with regard to changes in their human capital resources over time? Discuss how these factors have changed (for good or bad) since the group arrived in the community.

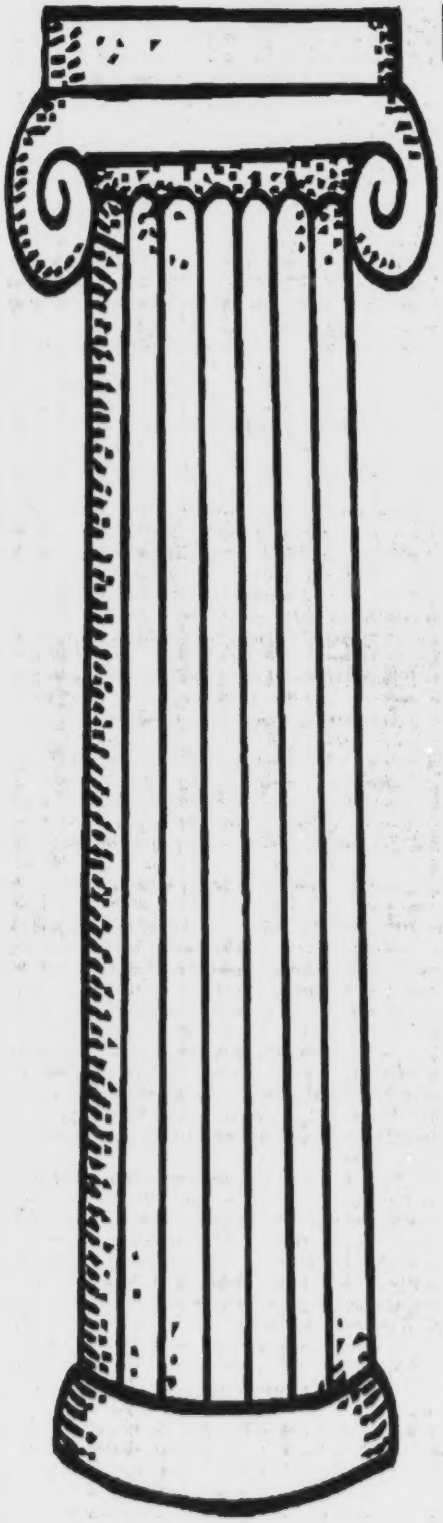
Q. What is the ultimate effect of these differences in human capital resources on the community's economic development? Discuss whether changes in human capital need to take place within each group before the community can achieve its economic development goals.

Discussion (Part 2)

Q. In what ways do cultural differences affect public policy decisions in the community? Among the general categories that are important to have on the list are:

a. When people of different cultures could unite to address common public concerns.
b. When people seeking a change in public policy are of a different cultural background from the decision-makers.
c. When cultural differences are central to the change sought or when policies are, or appear to be, applied differently across cultural sub-groups.
d. When racial or cultural understanding is the public policy issue.

Q. After a discussion of what impact cultural differences can have on these areas of public policy, look at a particular public policy instance in which there is a cultural difference element and analyze it. What needs to be done in order to assure that all cultural groups involved will benefit fairly from the decision?



Community Choices

Public Policy Education Program

Module Four

Understanding the Local Economy

David Mulkey
University of Florida

February 2000

SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER
SRDC

Module Four Instructor's Guide

Understanding the Local Economy

Objectives

This module's objective is to develop the necessary understanding to identify and discuss economic development issues at the local level. This module does not directly address human capital issues as do the other modules in the series. Rather, this module focuses on the economic environment within which human capital investment takes place. A small group activity is suggested to allow participants to think about their local economy, identify types of industries in their community, and to consider development alternatives.

Specifically, this session focuses on understanding the local economy through the following topics:

- Presenting export base theory as a model of the way a local economy works;
- Relating the general export base framework to the participants' state and community; and
- Using the community's economic framework to address the concept of economic development and to introduce a variety of programs to encourage local economic development.

Procedures and Time Line

- Provide an overview of the export base model (15 minutes).
- Undertake a discussion (for about 25 minutes) in which the participants relate the export base model to the state and community in which they reside.
- Provide an overview of the development concept and present some development alternatives that are available to communities. Allow about 40 minutes for this presentation.
- Break up into groups of equal number and carry out the accompanying activity. Have a representative from each group share a summary of their discussion and decisions (for about 5 minutes each).

Materials Needed

- Overhead projector and flip charts for use in the small group sessions.
- Copies of the overview document and the activity sheet on *Analyzing Your Local Economy*.

Understanding The Local Economy: Implications for Economic Development Programs

David Mulkey
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Preface

Earlier in this program, we explained that an individual's ability to make human capital investments—education, job-training, and work experience—in him/herself can either be aided or impeded by factors which influence economic opportunities in the community. The last four modules in the program will examine in greater detail human capital/resource issues. Before fully addressing these issues, however, program participants must first understand the economic development "context" in which they occur. This module presents a clear discussion of economic development issues at the community level that affect and are related to individuals' human capital investment options. We feel that by understanding how economic development works and the manners in which it can be achieved, the program participants can have a better basis for determining the human resources that will be needed to bring these development opportunities to fruition.

"It strains credibility to assum tha tlocal development will travel far on ignorance of the locality and how it works."

Introduction

With the advent of the 1980s, a series of national and international events combined to reverse the economic fortunes of many, if not most, rural areas. Employment declines in traditional rural industries—agriculture, manufacturing, and natural resource-based industries—were exacerbated by a national shift toward a service/information-based economy, by the internationalization of the U.S. economy, and by structural shifts within traditional agriculture and manufacturing [5]. While the 1990s have been much better for rural areas, some rural pockets continue to lag behind. Even among rural communities that are fairing well, many of them continue to depend on lower paying jobs. As a result of these factors, rural development is re-emerging as a priority issue at all levels of government.

The litany of reasons for the renewed interest in rural development is familiar: the lack of local job opportunities for young people, the obsolescence of job skills among older workers, over dependence on agriculture or other resource-based industries, the need for additional local tax revenue, concerns over the quality of rural life, and a general feeling of loss of local control. All point to a series of difficult challenges facing rural policy makers.

Given this setting, this module provides an overview of the economic development process for use by local program participants. The following section offers a framework for understanding in general how a local

As noted by Woods and Sanders [13], the economic challenges facing communities include the following:

- Maintaining and enhancing the competitiveness of farms and rural businesses;
- Bringing further diversification to the economic base of rural areas;
- Finding alternative uses for rural resources;
- Easing the transition for farm families;
- Providing technical and educational assistance for local units of government;
- Helping communities to identify and implement policy options designed

economy works. Subsequent sections focus on defining economic development and exploring economic development alternatives. The activity section provides an opportunity for relating these general economic development ideas to specific processes occurring in the community.

Material presented is summarized from sources listed in the reference section. This listing also is recommended as additional reading for persons who want a more detailed treatment than that provided here.

Export Base Theory: A Community Economic Framework

Export base theory is often used by community economists as a general framework for understanding how a local economy works and as a basis for a variety of community studies and economic development activities. The total spending associated with this recirculation of new dollars is the multiplier effect often seen in references to development programs. This approach considers that a region's economy consists of two distinct types of economic activity:

- **basic industries** that sell goods and services to markets located outside the local area; and
- **service industries** that mainly serve local markets. Basic industries attract outside dollars into the local economy, dollars that are then recirculated through local service industries (see Figure 1).

"Export base theory is often used by community economists as a general framework for understanding how a local economy works and as a basis for a variety of community studies and economic development activities."

Basic Industry

The key to identifying basic industries is, as noted above, the non-local nature of markets served, a distinction that is more important than the exact nature of the good or service produced. Typically, basic industries are associated with activities such as agriculture or manufacturing, but, in fact, almost any type of business can play a basic role at the local level if its products are sold elsewhere or if it attracts customers from other areas. In either case, the basic industry attracts outside (new) dollars into the local economy. Sales by basic industries initially provide jobs and income for employees of basic industries, but when re-spent locally, dollars attracted by basic industry sales support a variety of local service activities (the multiplier effect noted above).

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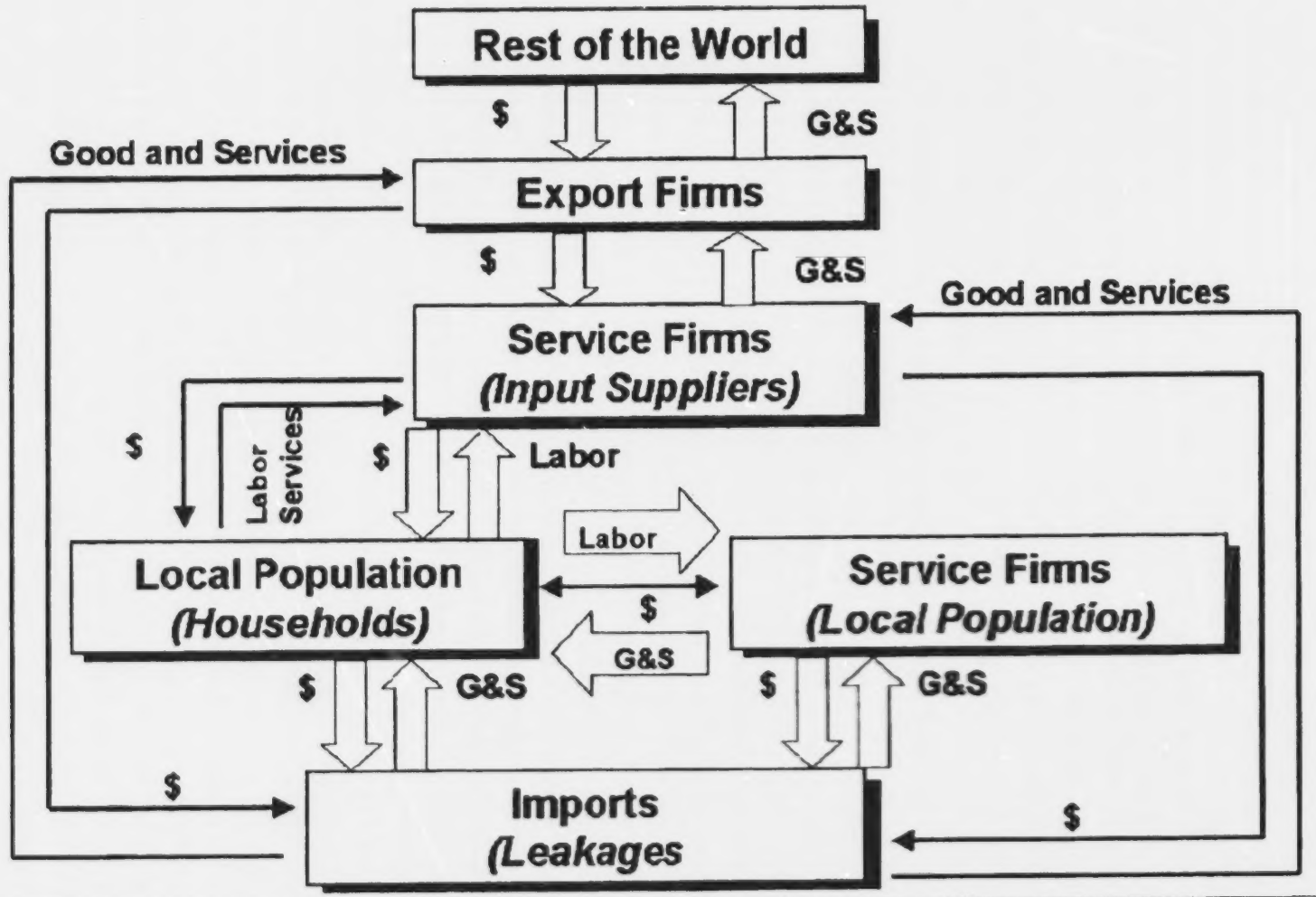
Figure 1. Economic Activities of a Community



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What are the basic industries in Southern states and various rural communities? Clearly, any listing would include federal government facilities and the traditional basic sectors—agriculture, forestry, fisheries, mining, and manufacturing—which ship a variety of products from Southern communities to markets located elsewhere, either within the United States or abroad. Many other businesses (often thought of as service industries) also serve a basic role in attracting outside dollars. Various service businesses (banking and financial services, real estate services, and consulting firms) are basic industries when they provide services to non-local clients; new dollars are attracted into the local or state economy.

Further, in many rural areas, businesses that serve large numbers of tourists are relatively important. Visitor expenditures include food and lodging, entertainment, travel services, and other goods and services associated with vacation or business travel. Tourist and travel-related firms differ from traditional basic industries only in the nature of the product provided and in the fact that customers travel to the region rather than purchasing a regional product and shipping it to their home state or country. The purchase represents new dollars attracted, dollars that provide jobs and income for residents and support a variety of service activities in the areas in question.

Finally, with regard to basic activities, one must also consider the large numbers of retirees who spend all or some part of each year in Southern states, particularly states like Florida. When retirement benefits are derived from sources that are located elsewhere, expenditures by retirees represent new dollars to the economy of the state where they reside in retirement. Thus, retiree spending represents basic activity in the same way as does spending by tourists. New dollars provide jobs and income for local residents, and multiplier effects provide support for local service activities.

"New dollars provide jobs and income for local residents, and multiplier effects provide support for local service activities."

Service Industry

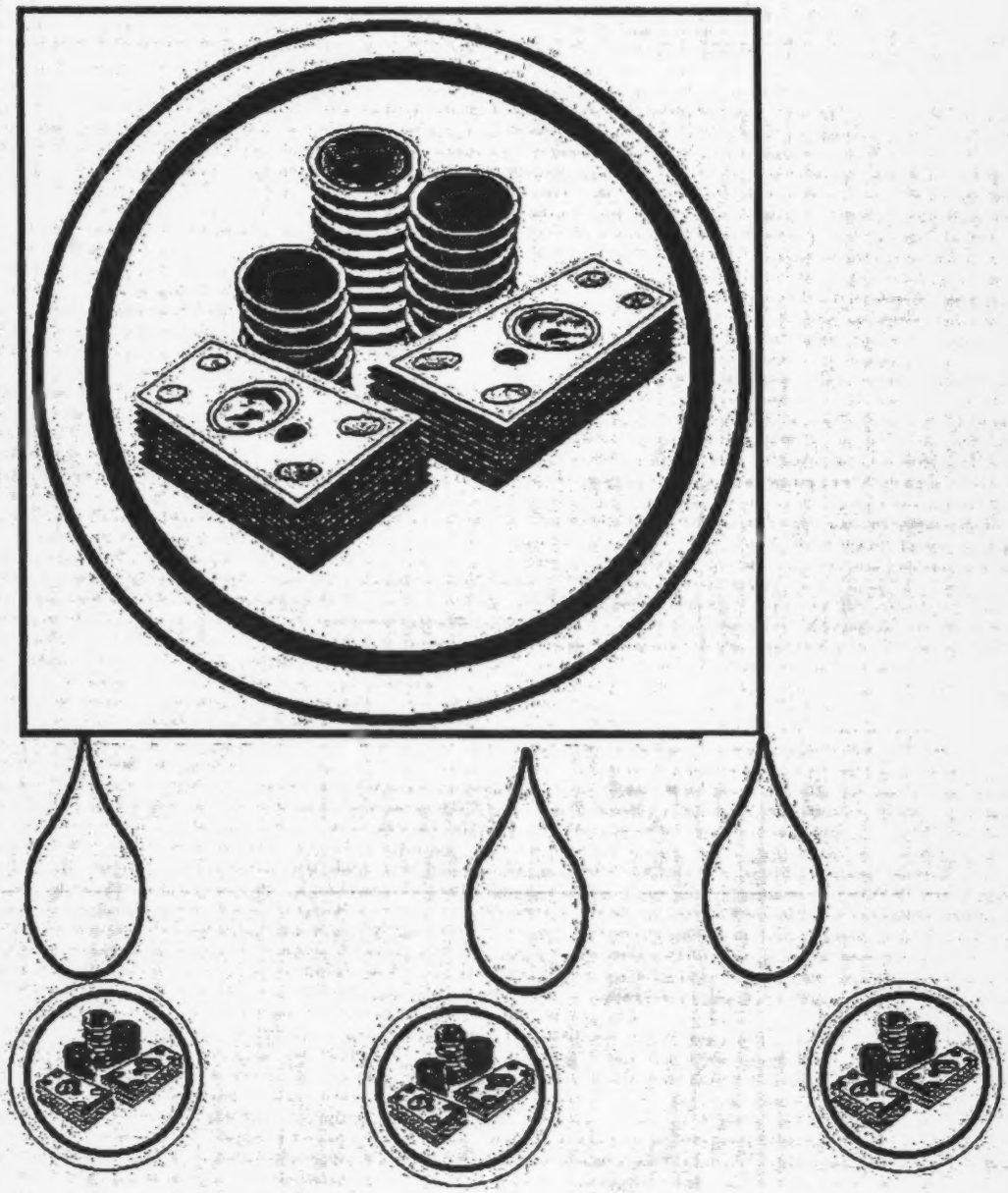
Service industries, unlike basic industries, are those firms that serve local markets. Examples include the full range of retail and service establishments that serve local residents as well as firms that sell goods and services (inputs) to firms engaged in basic activities. Service firms, in essence, prevent "leakages" of dollars from the local economy (see Figure 2).

Again, the key distinction in determining basic versus service activity is the location of the market and not the type of good provided. Any of the activities noted above as basic may be classified as service (non-basic) if products or services are sold in local markets.

Other Considerations

At both the state and local levels, two additional items are worth noting when considering the basic/non-basic distinction for any particular business firm or industry. First, many businesses actually perform both

Figure 2. The Local Economy——Leaking Resources?



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basic and service activities at the same time. At the state level, agriculture provides a useful example. A variety of commodities are sold outside the state, a basic (export) activity. At the same time, agriculture in each Southern state performs an important service function by selling the same variety of products to local consumers.

The same point holds for numerous other firms across the country that sell goods and services in both local and non-local markets. Examples would include banks, restaurants, amusement parks, retail stores, and repair shops that serve local residents as well as tourists and retirees. This mix of activities is certainly a complicating factor for community analysts, but from the economic development standpoint, it is important to remember that the activities are distinctly different in terms of the impact on the local economy.

An additional consideration grows out of the basic/non-basic distinction at the local or regional level as opposed to the state level. The geographic definition of the economy may determine whether a particular industry is engaged in a basic or non-basic activity.

Recall that the basic/non-basic distinction depends on whether a firm serves local or non-local markets. If the local community is defined as a city or county, markets located elsewhere within the same state are treated as non-local when assessing the economic role of a particular firm. Numerous examples can be cited. Consider the tourist from Pensacola, Fla., who vacations in Miami Beach; a business traveler from Mobile, Ala., who spends time in Birmingham; a Biloxi, Miss., consulting firm working for state government in Jackson; and state facilities located in rural communities.

At the state level, each activity clearly fits into the service category—each market served is local (within the state), and no new dollars are generated at the state level. If the development of a particular local area is the matter of concern, then each activity noted attracts new dollars (a basic activity) to a particular community. The fact that the new dollars come from Pensacola, Mobile, or Jackson rather than New York, Chicago, or Detroit makes no difference when considering the growth of a local economy. New dollars provide jobs and income for local residents and support local service firms.

"The existence of "multiplier" effects associated with basic industry often explains the emphasis of many economic development programs on attracting new, basic industry to the local community."

Basic and Service Firms and Local Economic Development

The basic/service dichotomy of export base theory shows the importance of both basic and service firms to local economic development. Basic industries influence local economic activity through sales outside the community (**direct impacts**) and generate additional local sales as funds are spent locally to purchase inputs and employ workers (**indirect impacts**). Finally, additional sales are generated locally (**induced impacts**) as employees and owners of direct and indirect business firms spend income that translates into additional local economic activity.
The existence of "multiplier" effects associated with basic industry often

explains the emphasis of many economic development programs on attracting new, basic industry to the local community. Local service firms are equally important to local economic development. Multiplier effects are not infinitely large and are dependent on local service firms to recirculate money within the local economy. Initially, not all dollars from basic industry sales are re-spent locally, and at each successive round of spending, impacts are reduced as funds are lost from the local economy. Leakages are in the form of savings in non-local institutions, taxes and fees paid to state and federal governments, corporate profits that accrue to non-local shareholders, and perhaps most importantly, as payment for goods and services that are imported from outside the local area. In short, multiplier effects vary with the industry and the size of the local economy in question. A larger and more diverse local service economy tends to magnify the effects of changes in the basic sector. More importantly, economic development activities must also devote attention to the service sector of the local economy.

"In short, economic development is a much more complex issue than is implied by simple concerns over community growth, and economic development programs involve a wide range of activities."

Defining Economic Development

Economic development is often defined only from the perspective of a particular interest within a local community or, more often, equated to community growth as measured in economic or demographic terms—population change, income, jobs, retail sales, and bank deposits. By the same token, "a development" often refers to a particular event in a community—a new shopping center, a subdivision, or an industrial plant. However, this presents an overly narrow perspective on economic development.

Woods and Sanders [13], for example, note that development refers to the "well-being of people in a particular geographic area, wherever they eventually reside." Economic development would include programs to improve local services and increase the equality of opportunity, as well as expanding the economic base of the community. They further note that "actual development activities will depend on the goals and needs identified by residents in the region of concern."

In a similar vein, Shaffer and Pulver [11] speak of economic development in terms of the goals of vitality and wealth. **Vitality** refers to the "...capacity to respond to changes inside and outside the community, creating a need for some kind of adjustment" to include "...shifting resources and responding to changing markets in order to provide the jobs and incomes and lifestyles the community desires." **Wealth**, in their words, includes "quality of life and personal well-being, relates to a community's ability to produce those things that people cherish." Their examples refer to community attributes such as clean air and water, jobs and income, scenic beauty, health, and housing, which have both monetary and non-monetary dimensions. Shaffer and Pulver [11], like Woods and Sanders [13], stress the importance of the values of people affected by development activities.

Other authors discuss similar attributes when discussing the concept

of development. Flora et al. talk in terms of community "self-development" to distinguish events that involve a local organization, that rely on the investment of substantial local resources, and that result in an enterprise that remains under local control. Coffey and Polese [2] use the term "endogenous development" to refer to development from within, while others stress the importance of structural, institutional, and technological change [3, 9, 10, 12].

In short, economic development is a much more complex issue than is implied by simple concerns over community growth, and economic development programs involve a wide range of activities. This can be visualized by thinking of the local economy as a system for meeting the needs and wants of people in a particular geographic area over time [13]. The capacity of this system to meet local needs then becomes the focus of the economic development process over time.

Economic Development Alternatives

A variety of theories exist to explain the process of community development at the local level; however, there is no one theory that is sufficient to guide local development activities. Rather, success may depend on a mix of

Several options are available for local community development programs:

- Provide local educational programs to improve the management capacity of existing firms. Such programs may be offered in partnership with the Cooperative Extension Service, Small Business Development Centers, or other community education organizations.
- Organize a business and industry visitation program where local volunteers visit local firms on a regular basis in an attempt to identify limitations to expansion.
- Encourage business growth by identifying capital sources. Include efforts to involve local financial institutions, to identify non-local sources of capital, and to organize local capital pools.
- Sponsor educational programs to keep local businesses aware of the latest developments in science and technology. Cooperative Extension Service programs for agricultural producers may provide a model for use with other types of firms.
- Improve the quality of the local workforce. Efforts could include such activities as vocational-technical training and literacy programs, as well as programs designed to improve supportive social services such as job counseling and day care.
- Provide local and regional services that compete in price with those of other communities. This includes the full range of public services such as water and sewer, waste disposal, and communications.

"Residents of every community control substantial sums of money that will be spent on the purchase of goods and services."

Several types of efforts are possible:

- Survey consumer needs and buying habits to identify the market potential of retail and service outlets.
- Analyze and renew downtown shopping districts or other retail areas.
- Help develop training programs for local retail and service employees.
- Encourage local residents and businesses to buy locally through information programs and seek opportunities to combine sales and service activities with recreational events.

"Attempts to attract new industry in the basic employment category is perhaps the best-known type of economic development program and it offers a viable option for many localities."

activities drawn from a number of approaches to the problem. Shaffer and Pulver [11] draw on existing theory to characterize development approaches as:

- supply-oriented,
- demand-oriented, or
- institutional.

The approaches differ in that they focus, respectively, on the community's resource base, on markets to be served by firms located in the community, or on the functioning of the local community. Alternatives discussed in the following sections incorporate a mixture of the three general approaches.

Improve Efficiency of Existing Firms

As firms become more efficient, they are more competitive in local and non-local markets, they are able to return a greater net income to the community, and their ability to stay in business or expand is enhanced.

Several specific options are available.

- Develop local industrial, office, or commercial sites, as well as public services, and provide information on the local labor supply.
- Develop community and regional facilities to provide transportation, recreation, business services, and communications. Conditions that make a community a nice place in which to live are becoming increasingly important.
- Provide local incentives that reduce the location or operating costs of new or expanding firms. These incentives include assistance with capital resources, such as revenue bond financing and a variety of tax incentives.
- Identify state and federal programs and facilities that might be located in the community and lobby to get them. Both the state and federal government are significant employers.
- Do not overlook nontraditional sources of basic income and employment. Rural communities have had success in attracting retirees, in developing area trade centers, in exploiting recreational resources, and in serving as bedroom communities for nearby urban centers.

Local communities can encourage business formation in a number of ways.

- Form capital groups to invest private funds locally. These pools can be informal arrangements or more formal such as a community development corporation.
- Provide counseling and educational assistance for those interested in starting businesses.
- Study the market potential for new retail, wholesale, service and industrial input providing businesses. This study can point out opportunities for new local establishments.
- Be aware that adversity often stimulates entrepreneurship. Events such as plant closures or lay-offs may stimulate interest in new businesses or self-employment.
- Adopt an encouraging community attitude towards new business

Local communities can take actions to capture a larger share of these dollars:

- Organize efforts to ensure the correct use of assistance programs by the elderly, the handicapped, and others who qualify for state and federal assistance programs, and work to improve services (that is, transportation, meals, or medical assistance) to the elderly and other qualified citizens.
- Obtain aid from state and federal governments in the form of grants for local projects (that is, water-sewer, streets, or parks). It is important to monitor government programs in a systematic, organized way so opportunities are not missed.

"State and federal governments return large sums of money to local commnities through grants and individual assistance programs."

Improve Ability to Capture Dollars

Residents of every community control substantial sums of money that will be spent on the purchase of goods and services. Efforts to influence the amount of spending that takes place within the local community contribute to local jobs and income.

Attract New Basic Employers

Attempts to attract new industry in the basic employment category is perhaps the best-known type of economic development program and it offers a viable option for many localities. However, communities must realistically assess their chances for success. Factors such as labor supply, transportation, location of related businesses, water or other resource constraints, and community attitudes and preparedness, come into play.

Encourage Business Formation

There is a continuous need for new businesses to meet changing demands from population growth or evolving goods and services. New businesses in a community may mean both new dollars and increased sales for existing businesses.

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Increase Aid Received from Broader Government

A community may be able to recapture some of the funds taxed away by other units of government. State and federal governments return large sums of money to local communities through grants and individual assistance programs.

Concluding Comments

This overview has offered a framework for understanding the way a local community works and has suggested several types of alternatives for encouraging local economic development. Not every alternative is suitable for every community and no one alternative guarantees success. It is, therefore, essential that program participants examine how their local economy is structured, how it changes, and what role its human resources play, in order to decide on future development strategies. Community economic development is an ongoing process that is largely dependent on community efforts in defining opportunities consistent with local values and capabilities. Success is likely to come in small increments and only through hard work.

Endnotes

a. This section is taken from Coates et al. [1], Pulver [8], Shaffer and Pulver [11], and Woods and Sanders [13].

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Module Four Instructor's Guide

Understanding the Local Economy

Small Group Activities

4-13

Activity # 1
Analyzing Your Local Economy

How can you analyze your own community's economy? This activity lets you relate the concepts of economic development discussed in this module to your community and state. It is suggested that program participants divide up into three or four groups of equal size and discuss the questions below. The groups should then come together and compare their findings in an attempt to more fully understand the many issues involved in the community's economic development. Remember that this activity is designed to promote and understanding of the economic context in which human capital resource issues arise. The next four modules will explore those issues addressed here. Worksheets are provided to allow more space to be used to unite and discuss answers to the various questions.

1. Refer to the overhead transparency #3 and list the **factors** you see that influence local economic activity. Afterwards discuss what changes in the local economy have taken place in your lifetime and why they have occurred.

   a. _____ d. _____

   b. _____ e. _____

   c. _____ f. _____

2. Focusing on the present, list all the types of industries that bring money into your community. Remember these can be "major" economic activities in your community and state or "minor" economic activities in your community.

3. Once group members have come up with a full list of money generating economic activities, your group should identify which are the **basic** industries that sell goods and services primarily to markets located outside of the local community. Be sure to discuss what changes have occurred and why.

4. Now, group members should identify which are the **service** industries in your community and/or state that mainly serve local markets. Be sure to discuss what changes have occurred and why.

5. Next, decide if there are industries in your community and/or state that serve **both** local and non-local markets. Be sure to list them, discuss their importance and any changes that have occurred.

6. With your local economy clearly outlined, the next critical step is to agree on your community's economic development **goal(s)**. What is it that your group is hoping to achieve over time?

7. Identify possible **challenges** facing your community's economic development goals in the space provided below. You can refer to overhead transparency #4 but remember, the challenges should be ones that will affect the goal(s) you outlined in No. 6 above.

a. _____ e. _____

b. _____ f. _____

c. _____ g. _____

d. _____ h. _____

Have group members identify which challenges may be related to human capital/resource issues, discuss them briefly and be sure to use notes from this discussion in the upcoming modules dealing specifically with these issues.

8. For each economic development alternative listed in this module, discuss and assess what its potential consequences might be for your community's economic development goals. What is likely to happen if this alternative is carried out? How will the community, in general, benefit? What specific industries will benefit? Will some industries be affected negatively as a result of this alternative? As a group, list these possible consequences on the worksheet.

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Worksheet

(numbers refer to activities on previous pages)

2. All Economic Activities

a. _____ g. _____

b. _____ h. _____

c. _____ i. _____

d. _____ j. _____

e. _____ k. _____

f. _____ l. _____

3. Industries That Serve Markets Outside the Community

a. _____ e. _____

b. _____ f. _____

c. _____ g. _____

d. _____ h. _____

4. Industries That Mainly Serve Local Markets

a. _____ e. _____

b. _____ f. _____

c. _____ g. _____

d. _____ h. _____

5. Industries That Serve Both Local and Non-Local Markets

a. _____ e. _____

b. _____ f. _____

c. _____ g. _____

d. _____ h. _____

6. Your Group's Goals

_____

_____

_____

7. Positive and Negative Consequences of Each Alternative

ALTERNATIVE 1: ***IMPROVE EFFICIENCY OF EXISTING FIRMS***

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

ALTERNATIVE 2: ***IMPROVE ABILITY TO CAPTURE DOLLARS***

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

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ALTERNATIVE 3: ***ATTRACT NEW BASIC EMPLOYERS***

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

ALTERNATIVE 4: ***ENCOURAGE BUSINESS FORMATION***

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

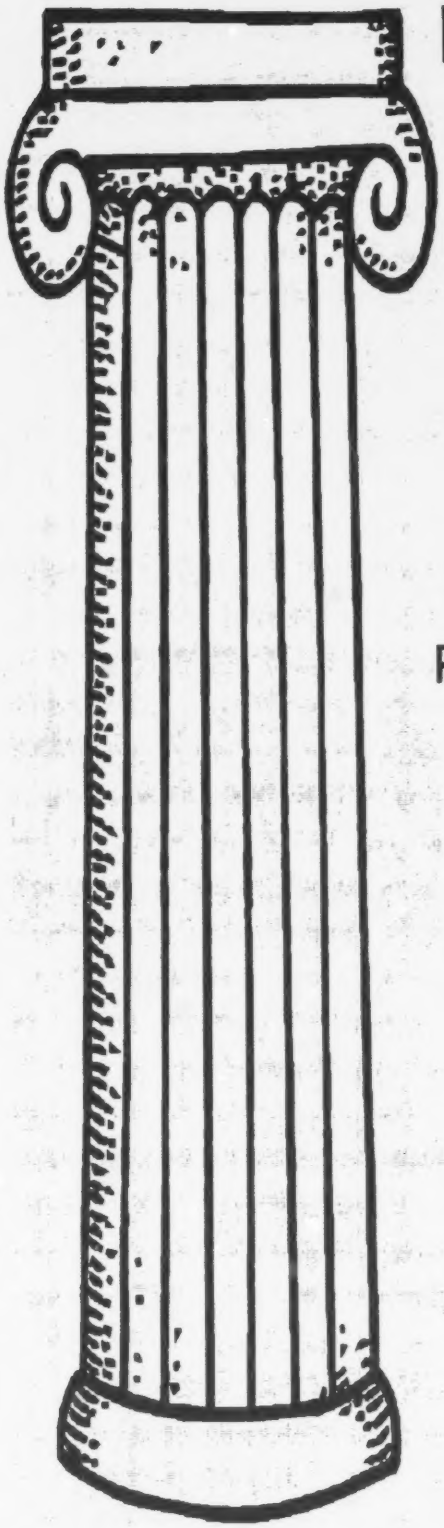
ALTERNATIVE 5: ***INCREASE AID FROM BROADER GOVERNMENT***

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____



Community Choices

Public Policy Education Program

Module Five

The Community's Human Resource Attributes

Lionel J. Beaulieu
Southern Rural Development Center

July 2001

SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER
SRDC

Module Five Instructor's Guide

The Community's Human Resource Attributes

Objectives

After completing the workshop, participants will be able to do the following:

- Determine the key items that help one to assess the human resource qualities of an area.
- Understand the linkages that exists between level of education and unemployment rates, income earnings, and poverty status.
- Appreciate the unique economic and social problems facing adult illiterates, high school dropouts, and non-college bound students.
- Develop an understanding of the significant human resource problems that exist in the South, particularly in its nonmetropolitan areas.

Procedures and Time Line

- Begin the session by asking participants to indicate what comes to mind when they think about the human resource qualities of their community. List these on a newsprint or a clean overhead transparency. After a few minutes, ask the group to state what importance these human resource features might have in shaping the social and economic health of their community. This group discussion should help attune the group to the human resource dimensions that will be given treatment in this module. Plan to spend about 10 minutes on this introductory portion of your workshop.
- Use the information generated in the group discussion to introduce the human resource attributes that will be highlighted in this module. Indicate that in thinking about the human resources found in a community (or county, region, or country), it is not uncommon to give primary attention to the educational status of the population living in that area. It is this subject of educational status, coupled with the related subjects of poverty, unemployment and earnings, that is given major treatment in this module. During the next 20 to 30 minutes, present some key facts about the human resource conditions of the United States and those outlined for the South. Be ready to get the group involved in some discussion of the information you are presenting if the opportunity presents itself.
- After presenting the data contained in the module, offer the group the list of challenges found in the conclusions section of the module. Ask participants to share what they think might be other challenges given the information that has been shared with them in this session.

For the final phase of the workshop, get the participants involved in one of the activities that has been prepared to complement this session. This portion of the session should take 50 to 60 minutes.

Materials

- Overhead projector and/or computer projector
- Newsprint pad and markers
- Copies of *The Community's Human Resource Attributes* module
- Copies of the activity sheets

Going Further—
Things For Participants To Do

Have participants visit with members of the local school board and with high school administrators to discuss the nature and extent of the high school dropout problem in the community. Visit the local state employment agency. Ask about job prospects for people with different levels of education. What educational requirements are local employers requesting?

The Community's Human Resource Attributes

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Introduction

As people begin to survey the features of local communities, it's not uncommon to examine such things as the quality of the health delivery system, the availability of good housing, the level of access to a variety of retail services, and the breadth of cultural amenities. The one attribute that tends to rank highest for many individuals who now live in, or are considering moving to, a given community is the quality of its educational system.

People are increasingly concerned about how well schools educate students and prepare them for educational opportunities beyond high school or for productive jobs when they enter the labor force. And that concern often influences decisions made about the attractiveness of a local community as a place to live.

"People are increasingly concerned about how well schools educate students and prepare them for educational opportunities beyond high school."

This document discusses factors that tend to provide a good pulse of the human resource qualities found in a given locality. Specifically, educational status and its relationship to poverty and other socioeconomic outcomes are examined. These factors represent meaningful measures for assessing the strength of an areas's human resources. The primary intent of this module is to provide a descriptive overview of the human resource qualities of a locality, and to give careful thought to the consequences that these attributes may have on the social and economic health of this community.

Exploring Educational Status

The amount of education that people possess represents an important index of the human resource characteristics of an area. As will be demonstrated in this section, the economic and social complexion of a community is significantly shaped by the educational status of its population.

At the national level, 1999 education statistics reveal the following (see Figure 1):

- Nearly 83 percent of all persons 25 years of age or older are high school graduates.
- About 1 in 4 persons in the 25 + age category have completed a baccalaureate degree or higher.

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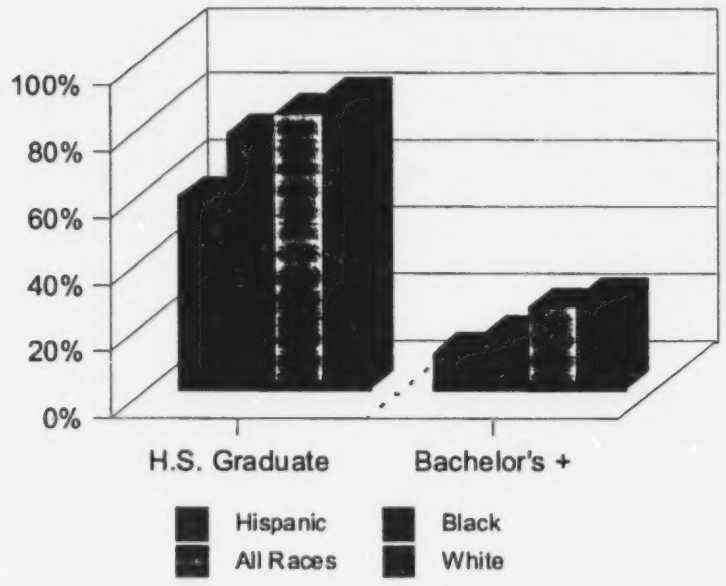
Figure 1. Years of School Completed by Persons 25 + Years Old in the United States, March 1999.



	H.S. Graduate	Bachelor's +
Hispanic	57.7%	11.1%
Black	76.7%	16.0%
All Races	82.6%	24.5%
White	87.8%	27.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March 1999.

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- Educational attainment among individuals 25 years of age or over varies by race and ethnic background. High school completion reaches the 87.8 percent level among whites, 76.7 percent among blacks, and 57.7 percent among hispanics. The percent of persons with a bachelor's degree or more is highest among whites (27.5 %), but slips to 16 percent among blacks and to 11.1 percent among hispanics.

Education's Link With Unemployment and Earnings

Educational attainment has a profound impact on the individual's capacity to secure a job and to earn a decent income. Two charts (see Figures 2 and 3) bring this message home. Figure 2 shows that unemployment decreases as one's level of education increases. In 1998, for example, the overall unemployment rate for persons 16 years of age and above with less than a high school education was over 5 times higher than for individuals holding a college degree or more (8.5 percent vs. 1.8 percent unemployed). Rates of unemployment did vary by race and ethnicity. Unemployment among blacks, for example, proved higher than those of whites and hispanics at nearly every educational level. The sole exception was for college graduates, where unemployment among hispanics was slightly higher than that found among blacks.

As a general statement, educational success is an important ticket for securing a job and maintaining a job. It is clear that for persons with less than a high school education, their chances of being unemployed are anywhere from 3-6 times higher than that of their college-educated counterparts (depending upon the specific race/ethnic category being examined). Given the increasing demand for educated and skilled workers, the long term prospects for workers with no high school education appears gloomy.

Figure 3 shows the income differences associated with various levels of education. In 1998, the average income earned by individuals (of all races) with a baccalaureate degree or higher exceeded $52,000. This income level decreased steadily as one moved down the education ladder. Persons with less than a high school education (9-11th grade) averaged less than $18,300, an income level that was 65 percent below that of individuals with a college degree.

As a rule, the average income of hispanics was lower than that of whites, while the income of blacks proved to be even lower than those of hispanics, regardless of the educational level under examination.

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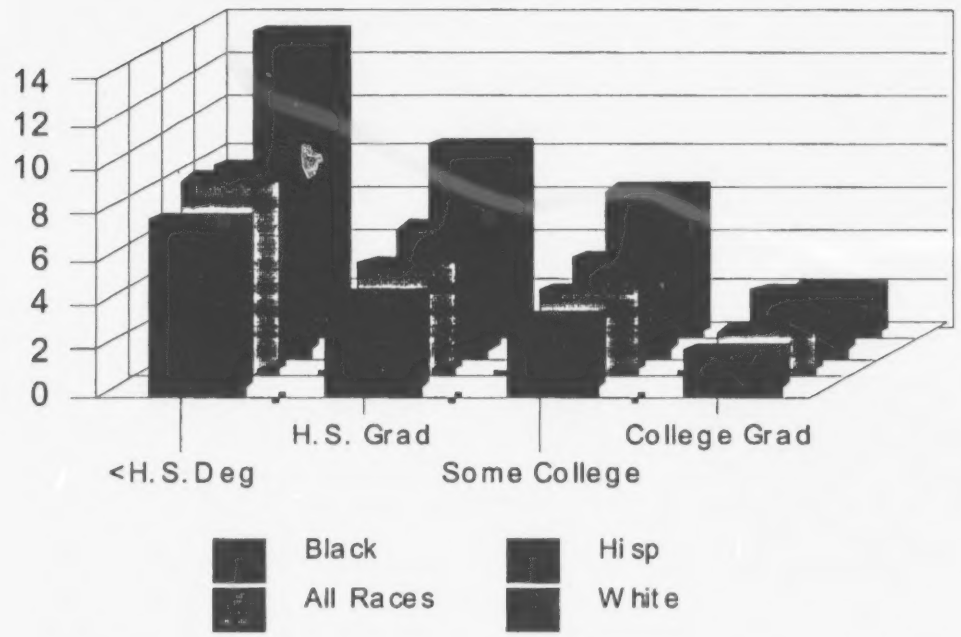
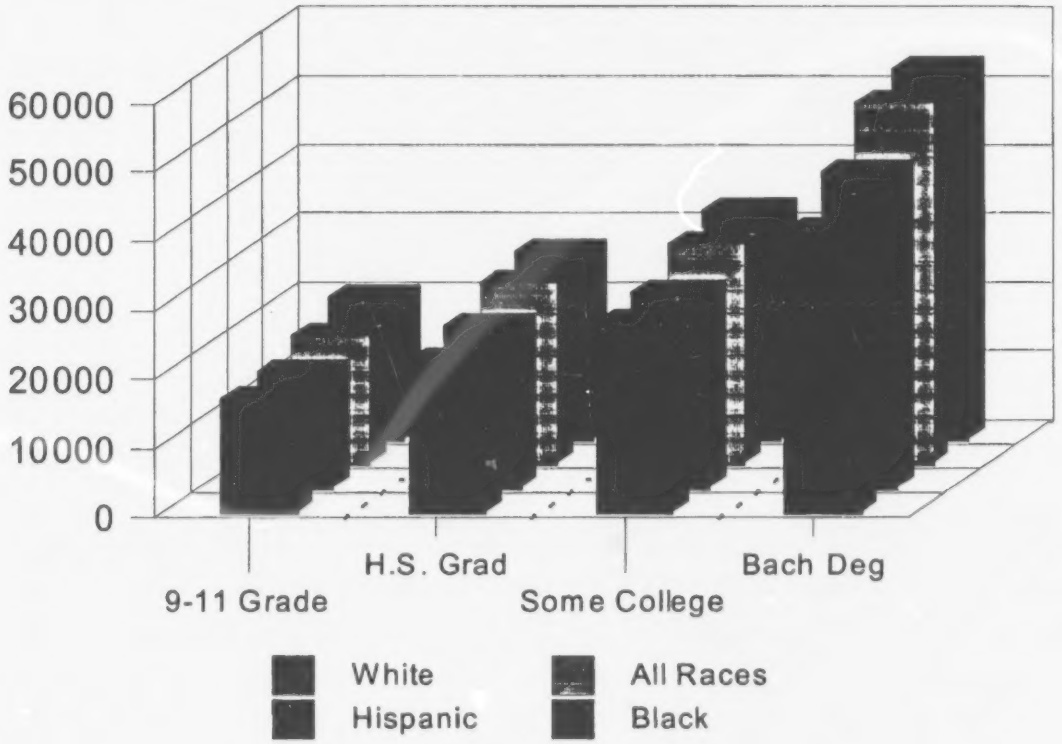
Figure 2. Unemployment Rates of Persons 25-64 Years Old by Years of School Completed, 1998.



	< H.S. Degree	H.S. Graduate	< Bachelor's Degree	College Graduate
Black	13.4%	8.4%	6.4%	2.1%
Hispanic	8.3%	5.5%	4.2%	2.8%
All Races	8.5%	4.8%	3.6%	1.8%
White	7.5%	4.2%	3.2%	1.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1999.

Figure 3. Average Earnings for Full-Time Persons 25 + Years of Age by Years of School Completed, 1998.



	9-11th Grade	H.S. Graduate	Some College	Bachelor's +
White	$20,506	$27,235	$32,989	$53,547
All Races	18,277	26,141	31,850	52,159
Hispanic	16,667	23,360	28,071	45,540
Black	16,434	21,843	27,607	40,774

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March 1999.

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Education and Poverty

The link between educational attainment and impoverishment is startling. In 1999, over 22 percent of adults 25 years of age or older having less than a high school education lived in poverty (see Figure 4). Poverty touched 9.2 percent of adult Americans having a high school education, while the figure dipped to 6.1 percent among those with some college education. For the college graduate, only 2.8 percent lived below the poverty line in 1999 [2].

When examined on the basis of race and ethnic background, the percent of the adult population living in poverty was most extensive among blacks and hispanics who lacked a high school degree (34.4 percent and 26 percent, respectively). Better education significantly reduced the poverty status of all racial and ethnic groups. For example, the percent of blacks with less than a high school education living in poverty in 1999 proved to be ten times higher than that found for college-educated African Americans (34.4 percent vs. 3.2 percent). Clearly, education proved to be the key vehicle for escaping poverty.

A Word About Functional Illiteracy

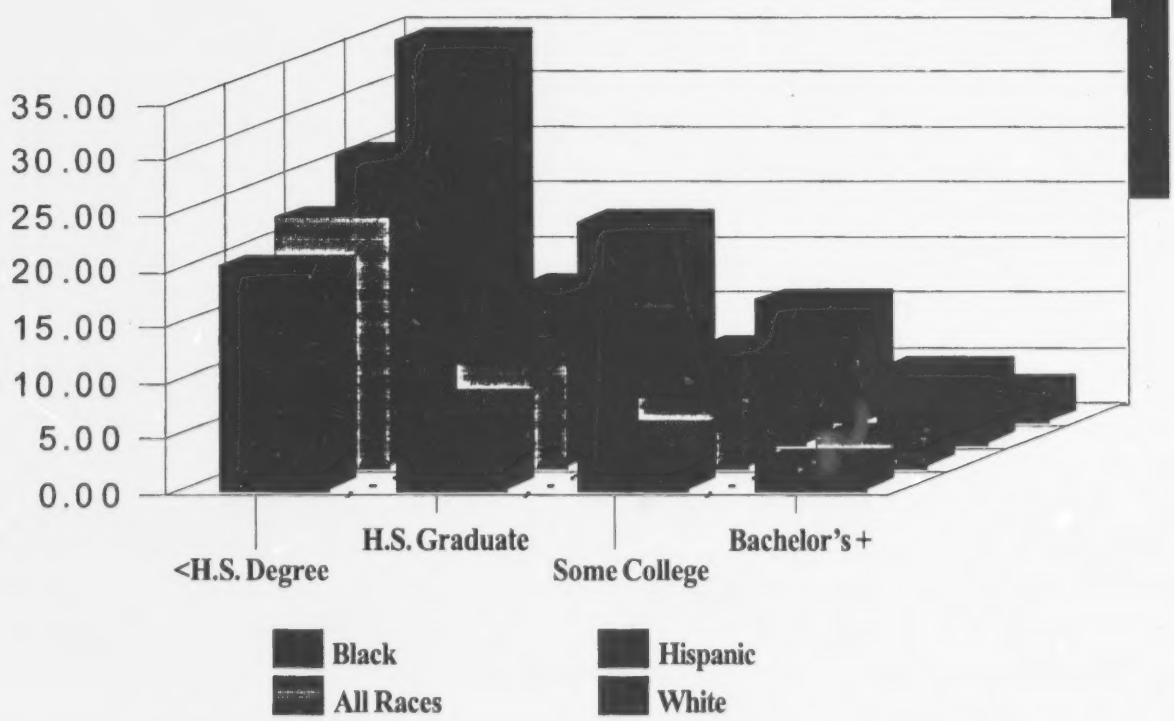
An important education issue that has generated much concern is that of illiteracy. Several years ago, Jonathan Kozol [4] claimed that 25 million American adults could not read and an additional 35 million people had only minimal reading capacity that left them unable to effectively function in today's society. The National Adult Literacy Survey, conducted by the U.S. Department of Education in the early part of the 1990s, found that 40-44 million adults in the country demonstrated skills in the lowest level of prose, document and quantitative abilities [7]. Approximately 62 percent of those in this lower literacy category failed to ever complete a high school education. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce estimates that functional illiteracy is costing U.S. businesses $300 billion annually in lost productivity [5].

"Many believe that all public and private literacy programs combined provide services to only a handful of those in need of literacy programs."

While illiteracy continues to be a major problem in this country, many believe that all public and private literacy programs combined provide services to only a handful of those in need of literacy programs. This is unfortunate given that those who function at the lowest literacy level tend to suffer from higher rates of unemployment and poverty, and have greater dependence on state and federal public assistance programs.

The general definition of functional illiteracy is one in which the individual cannot function sufficiently on the job or in everyday life because of a lack of basic skills ranging from reading, writing and mathematics [9]. This definition makes the accurate measurement of functional illiteracy a difficult task at best.

Figure 4. Poverty Status of Persons 25 + Years Old by Education, 1999.



	<H.S. Degree	H.S. Graduate	Some College	Bachelor's +
Black	34.4%	17.9%	10.8%	3.2%
Hispanic	26.0%	14.2%	8.6%	6.8%
All Races	22.4%	9.2%	6.1%	2.8%
White	20.0%	7.9%	5.2%	2.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1999.

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While not ideal, one approach that has gained some acceptance as a proxy measure for functional illiteracy is the number of school years completed. It is suggested that persons who have completed 8 years or fewer of education are at risk of being functionally illiterate. The use of this measure seems reasonable in light of the fact that the National Adult Literacy Survey found that 75-80 percent of adults with Level 1 literacy skills (the lowest category on the literacy scale) had 0-8 years of education [7].

Figure 5 reveals that nearly 8 percent of the U.S. population 25 years of age and older have an 8th grade education or less — our proxy measure of functional illiteracy. This percentage is lowest among whites (4.5 percent) and highest among hispanics (26.2 percent). Sizable variations do exist, however, on the basis of the metropolitan status of the area in which individuals reside. As a general point, adults living in metropolitan areas of the U.S. are less likely to be functionally illiterate when contrasted with persons located in the nonmetro areas of the country (7.8 percent vs. 8.5 percent). The disparities are particularly significant among blacks. About 7.1 percent of metro blacks are considered to be functionally illiterate, with this figure swelling to 14 percent for African Americans living in the nonmetro U.S. For hispanics, the level of functional illiteracy tends to be slightly higher in the nonmetropolitan U.S., although both the metro and nonmetro percentages are quite sizable.

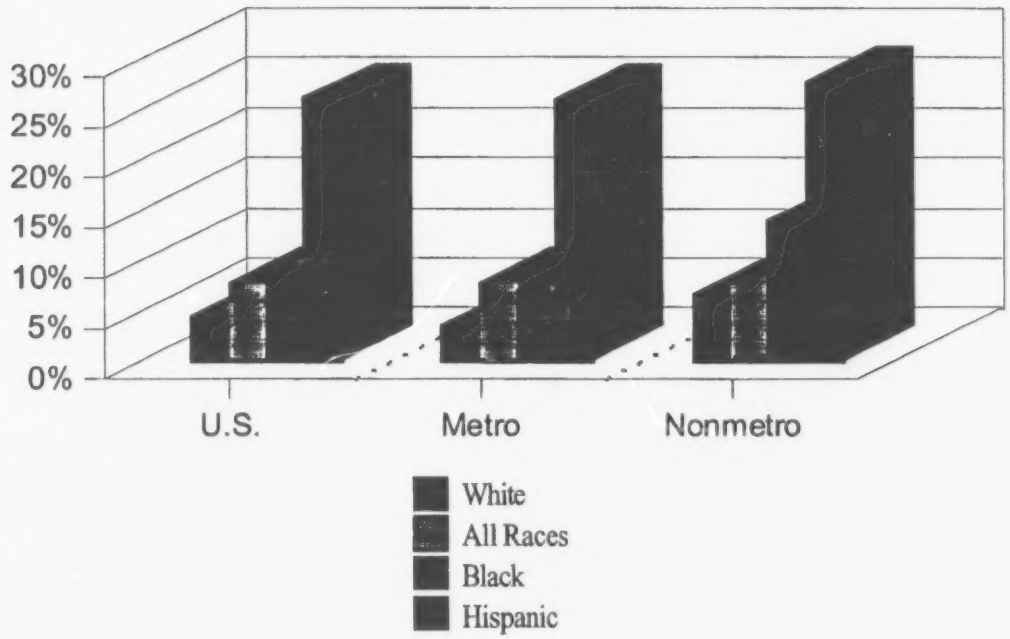
"Dropout rates proved to be much higher among black and hispanics when compared to those of whites."

Dropouts and Non-College Bound Students

While we have presented information on the educational status of adults 25 years of age and above, what about the high school dropout rate among persons 18-24 years of age in the United States? Recent data on the status dropout rates of individuals (i.e., the percentage of persons 16-24 years old who have not completed high school and are not enrolled in any high school program) show:

- The proportion of individuals (16-24 years old) who were high school dropouts in 1999 stood at 11.2 percent, a figure that was somewhat lower than that found for much of the period of the 1990s [3].
- Dropout rates proved to be much higher among black and hispanics when compared to those of whites. For example, some 7.3 percent of white, non-hispanics 16-24 years of age were dropouts in 1999. This figure increased to 12.6 percent among black, non-hispanic individuals, and to 28.6 percent among hispanics [3].
- Even in light of the good economic times that the nation enjoyed over the decade of the 1990s, the unemployment rate for dropouts in 1998 was 6.5 percentage points higher than the rate for high school graduates (15.7 percent vs. 9.2 percent). Furthermore, nearly 35 percent of high school dropouts were not even in the labor force in 1998, much higher than the 14.9 percent non-labor force participation found among high school graduates [6].

Figure 5. Persons 25 + Years Old With an 8th Grade Education or Less by Metro/Nonmetro Residence, March 1999.



	U.S.	Metro	Nonmetro
White	4.5%	3.7%	6.7%
All Races	7.9%	7.8%	8.5%
Black	8.0%	7.1%	14.0%
Hispanic	26.2%	26.1%	27.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (various years).

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Closely related to the dropout issue is that of non-college bound students. Several years ago, the William T. Grant Foundation noted in one of its highly regarded reports on America's youth and families that nearly one-half of young adults 16-24 years of age were not going on to college after high school. The report labeled them the "Forgotten Half," principally because the Foundation felt that educators were focused on attending to the needs of students who were going on to college and as such, were failing to meet the needs of those who were not college bound [8]. The by-products of this inattention, the report argued, has been a shrinking pool of decent jobs with a good future available for these non-college bound persons, increasing uncertainty with regard to job security, and erosion in the real income earned by these individuals in their jobs.

While the William T. Grant report was released in the late 1980s, many of the concerns expressed at that time remain true today. In fact, Beaulieu, Israel and Cluck [1] recently released a report that examined the labor force experiences of non-college bound youth in the U.S. who entered the workforce after graduating from high school in 1982. They found that over the course of several years, most non-college bound persons remained employed in lower paying, lower status jobs. Few were able to good decent jobs that paid decent wages and that could provide them with economic security over the long-term.

"Several years ago, the William T. Grant Foundation noted in one of its highly regarded reports on America's youth and families that nearly one-half of young adults 16-24 years of age where not going to college after high school."

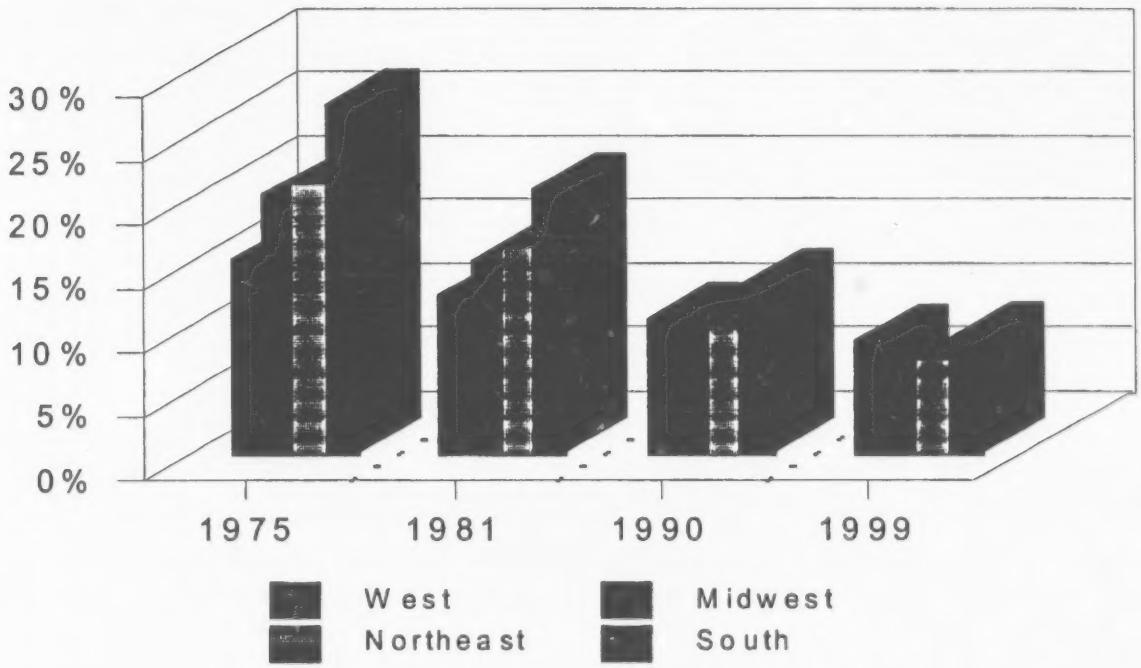
Human Resource Conditions in the South

As we take stock of the human resource qualities of the U.S. as a whole, it is important to be attuned to the unique set of human resource problems that face our region of the country, namely, the South. In general, the South suffers from a number of human resource limitations, many of which are the worst of any region in the country.

Consider the following facts:

- In comparison to other regions of the country, the South has the highest proportion of functional illiterates (see Figure 6), that is, persons with an 8th grade education or less. But, recognition must be given to the fact that the South has made major educational strides over the past 25 years. In 1975, for example, over 27 percent of the South's adult population (25 years old and over) were considered to be functionally illiterate (that is, had an 8th grade education or less). By 1999, the figure had dwindled to 9 percent.

Figure 6. Persons 25 + Years Old with an 8th Grade Education or Less, by U.S. Region, 1975-1999.



	1975	1981	1990	1999
West	15.3%	12.4%	10.5%	8.9%
Midwest	20.3%	15.1%	9.2%	5.8%
Northeast	21.2%	16.2%	9.8%	7.3%
South	27.4%	20.7%	13.2%	9.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Statistics, March 1998.

- The South has the second highest status dropout rate (in 1999) in the nation for persons 16-24 years of age at 12.7 percent. Only the Western region surpasses the South on this measure (13.8 percent). Unfortunately, of the 3.8 million persons 16-24 years of age who are high school dropouts in the U.S., nearly 40 percent are residents of the South. [3].

- The region's metro and nonmetro areas have both witnessed measurable declines since 1990 in the percent of their adult population (25-64 years old) having less than a high school education. But even with these improvements, six of every 10 nonmetro adults either had terminal high school degrees (40.4 percent) or less than a high school education (22.2 percent) in 1999. In contrast, less than 46 percent of metro residents fell into the high school education or less categories (see Figure 7).

"The region's metro and nonmetro areas have both witnessed measurable declines since 1990 in the percent of their adult population having less than a high school education."

- As shown in Figure 7, the expansion of college-educated residents has been negligible in the nonmetro South, increasing by only one percent over a nine year period. Metro areas, on the other hand, have seen adult populations with baccalaureate degrees or more increasing from 23.9 percent to 28.1 percent between 1990 and 1999. So today, more than one in four persons in the metro South are college educated, while the rate is approximately one in seven in the region's nonmetro areas.

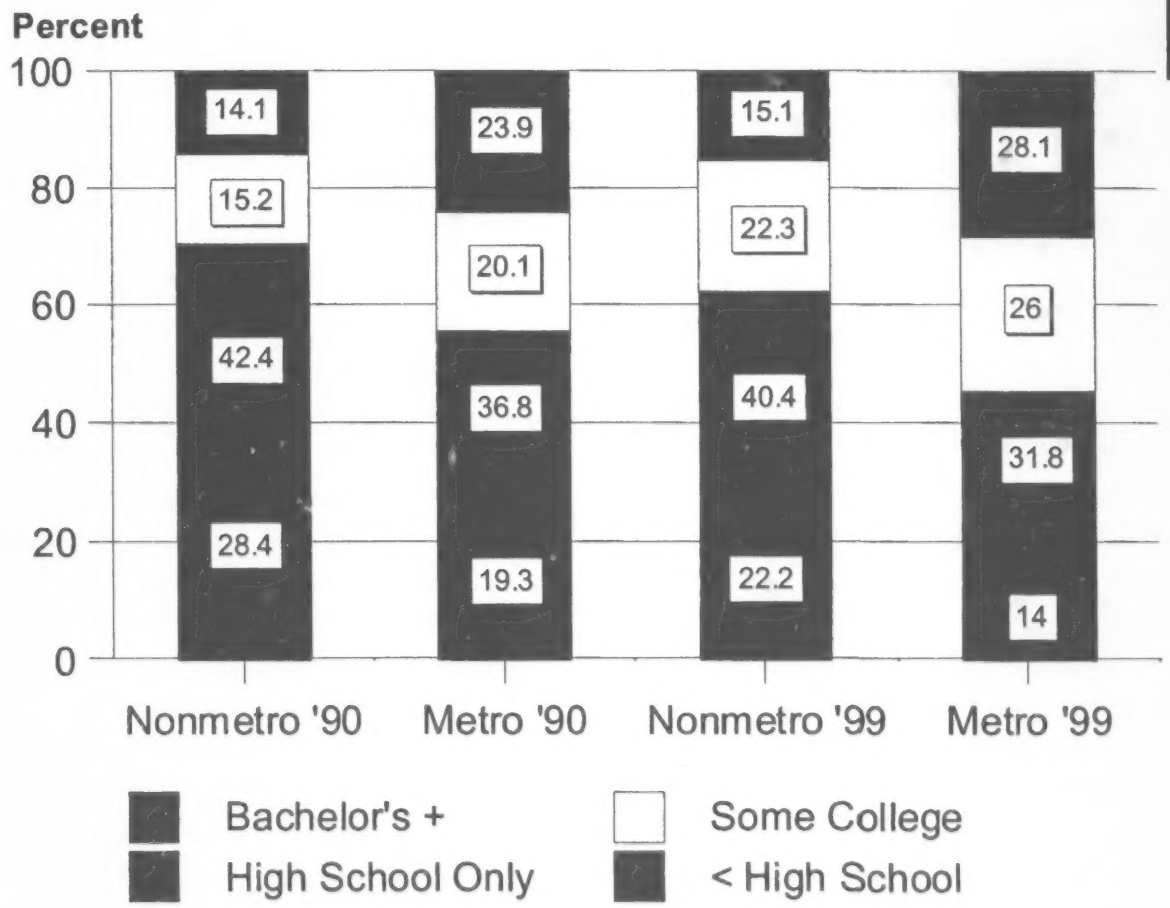
While these data are informative in their own right, greater insight on the educational progress realized by metro and nonmetro Southerners over the past decade can be gleaned from Table 1. It shows that:

- Nonmetro whites have witnessed a 27 percent decline in the percent of its adult population with less than a high school education since 1990 (from 24.9 percent to 18.2 percent). Still, the 1999 figure is twice the rate found among metro whites (8.4 percent).

- High school completion rates among the region's rural African Americans continue to show progress. As of 1999, the proportion of nonmetro blacks with terminal high school degrees stood at 43.1 percent, an improvement of about five percentage points since 1990.

- Hispanics remain entrenched in the lowest rungs of the educational attainment ladder, particularly in the South's nonmetropolitan areas. As of 1999, over one-half of rural Hispanic adults had less than a high school education, a figure that was virtually identical to that found in 1990.

Figure 7. Educational Status of Metro/Nonmetro Residents (25-64 years old) in the South, 1990 and 1999.



Source: Current Population Survey, March 1990 and 1999.

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Table 1. Educational attainment of metro and nonmetro adults (25-64 years old) in 1990 and 1999, by race and ethnicity.

Race/Ethnicity	1990		1999	
	Metro	Nonmetro	Metro	Nonmetro
White				
< High School	13.6	24.9	8.4	18.2
H.S. Only	37.3	43.6	31.7	41.0
Some College	21.1	15.9	27.1	23.7
Bachelors +	28.0	15.6	32.9	17.1
No. of cases	11,788	5,553	9,930	3,860
African American				
< High School	26.6	41.1	16.7	28.3
H.S. Only	40.0	38.3	36.8	43.1
Some College	15.7	13.1	27.9	20.7
Bachelors +	14.0	7.6	18.6	7.9
No. of cases	2,756	1,108	2,584	696
Hispanic				
< High School	39.1	50.7	33.2	51.8
H.S. Only	31.9	35.2	28.4	30.3
Some College	16.4	8.7	21.3	12.7
Bachelors +	12.7	5.5	17.2	5.2
No. of cases	2,414	219	2,571	363

Source: Current Population Survey, March 1990 and 1999.

- The largest pool of educated Southerners, across all race and ethnic categories, remain embedded in the region's metropolitan localities. The percentage of white, African American, and Hispanic residents with baccalaureate degrees or better is approximately two to three times greater in the metro South than in the nonmetro South as of 1999. Only 7.9 percent of rural Southern blacks had a college education in 1999, while the figure for Hispanics was even lower (5.2 percent).

- Since 1990, the metro/nonmetro gap has increased in terms of presence of college-educated adults in the population. For example, the percent of African Americans with college degrees in the metro South grew by 33 percent during the 1990-99 period (from 14 percent to 18.6 percent). In the nonmetro South, expansion of college-educated blacks inched up by less than 4 percent (from 7.6 percent to 7.9 percent). Simply put, metro areas are expanding their pool of educated adults of prime working age at a faster pace than are the region's nonmetro areas.

Conclusions

The human resources that are available in an area have a great effect on the prospects of realizing economic and social progress in a community. From the information presented in this document, it is apparent that access to employment and to a decent wage is closely tied to the quality of the human resources that people possess.

There are a number of important challenges that face rural leaders and residents as they struggle to advance the human resource endowments of their communities. These challenges include:

- How to get high-school-aged students to stay in school and to complete their high school education?
- How to address the high school dropout problems that touch so many blacks and hispanics today?
- How to secure a decent future for the large pool of non college-bound persons?
- How to help adults who suffer from functional illiteracy and who are unable to qualify for many of the jobs now focused in local labor markets?
- How to expand the pool of adults in our communities who have some type of post-secondary education, be it a technical/vocational or a baccalaureate degree?

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These are but a small sampling of some of the tough questions that confront many communities today. And for rural areas of the South, the challenges are even more pervasive. How do we develop the human resources needed to make the rural South competitive in the 21st century? It is an issue that deserves the attention of citizens and leaders in every rural community in the South. How committed local leaders and citizens are to effectively addressing these questions may very well dictate the long-term economic and social health of their communities.

References

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[2] Dalaker, Joseph and Bernadette D. Proctor. *Poverty in the United States: 1999.* U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, Series P60-210. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 2000.

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[6] U.S. Census Bureau. *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1999.* Washington, DC.

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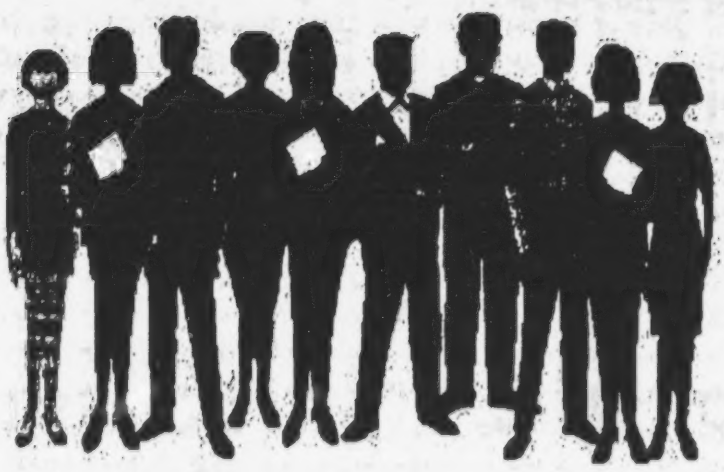
[8] William T. Grant Foundation. *The Forgotten Half: Pathways to Success for America's Youth and Young Families.* Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship (November), 1988.

[9] Youth Policy Institute. *Youth Policy* 12 (November/December), 1990.

Module Five Instructor's Guide

The Community's Human Resource Attributes

Small Group Activities



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Activity 1

Taking a Look at the Human Resource Characteristics of Your State

1. We have had an opportunity in this session to examine some of the key human resource features of the U.S. and the South. Now, we would like to offer you the time to study important facts about your state for the purpose of exploring its human resource attributes. While the information being provided for this activity tends to be primarily state-level information, we encourage your group to seek county and community level data so that local human resource conditions can be examined and discussed by all of you who are participating in the *Community Choices* program.

Using the information presented in the attached tables (Tables 1-3), we would like you to study the facts on your Southern state with regard to the following items:

- The percent of the state's population (25 years of age and above) having a 4-year college education or better (that is, a bachelor's or advanced degree) in 1990 and 1998 (see Table 1);
- The percent of the population having a high school degree only in 1990;
- The percent of the population with less than a high school education in 1990 and 1998 (to calculate this for 1998, subtract the percent "high school graduate or more" from 100);
- The percent of people with some college (but no degree) and those with an associate's degree;
- The proportion of students in the state who had not completed a high school degree in 1990.
- The extent to which the percent with a high school education or more, and the percent who are college graduates or more, vary by race and ethnicity (whites, blacks, and hispanics) in 1990 (see Table 2);
- The amount of revenues that states have to support public elementary and secondary education in 1998, and the source of these funds (compare how much comes from the various sources in different states in the region). Also, the per capita amount of dollars that is spent in your state for elementary and secondary education (see Table 3).

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2. Once you have complete this task, break up into small groups of five to seven people and share with each other some of your observations. As a group, explore how your state differs from other states in the South. Is your state worse off or better off in terms of the characteristics of its human resources?

3. As a small group, identify what you think is the most critical human resource problem facing your state at present (try to use the data you have studied to strengthen your case). What does your group feel are some of the factors that have contributed to this human resource problem? Please list these items on a newsprint pad or overhead transparency.

4. Discuss and identify two or three alternatives that might be considered for addressing this human resource issue. What might be some of the consequences associated with each of these alternatives? List these alternatives and consequences on the newsprint pad or overhead transparency.

5. A representative from your group should be selected to share a brief overview of your group's discussion with others taking part in the ***Community Choices*** program.

Activity 2

Education and Workforce Quality Issues and Strategies: What Do You Think?

Over the past several years, a number of authors have offered their views of the difficulties that loom ahead if the human resource shortcomings of our country are not soon addressed. Selected parts of these articles that relate directly to the quality of our present workforce and the adequacy of our country's educational system have been excerpted. Also, strategies that some of the authors proposed for dealing with these issues have been outlined. Study the problem excerpts and recommendations.

I. ADULT WORK FORCE

a. Problems/Issues

Jobs for the unskilled and poorly educated are disappearing and future employment will require, if not higher education, at least good communications skills and basic ability in math and reading, a new study says. . . The nation is in transition from an industrial to a service economy, which means most jobs will require education and skills.

"Study: No Education, No Job Future." Randolph E. Schimid.

We have a work place crisis in this country. . . The crisis is that more than four out of 10 of the workers who are on the job today are not being trained to do the work that today's economy demands... Forty-two percent of the workforce will need additional training over the next decade to keep up with the new demands of their jobs, but will not get the training if present practices continue.

"50 Million Workers Need Training and Development, Says National Group." Youth Policy Journal.

Shortcomings are not limited to what today's students are learning in school. . . Perhaps 25 million adults are functionally illiterate. As many as 25 million more adult workers need to update their skills or knowledge.

"America 2000: An Education Strategy." Youth Policy Journal

In the new economy, brainpower trumps the cards economists have traditionally counted on in their growth hand. Cheap land and unskilled labor are plentiful around the world. Capital goes where it will earn the best return . . . And advanced machinery-technology can be moved anywhere in the world, where people can be easily trained to use it. Brainpower trumps them all.

1998 Commission on the Future of the South

The 21st Century battle for economic opportunity is going to hinge on digital preparedness and digital literacy. It is important to note that the South as a whole is not well prepared for the digital economy . . . The South has the lowest proportion of residents using the Internet and the fewest households with e-mail of any region of the United States.

"The State of the South 2000." MDC, Inc.

Requirements for good, well-paying jobs are changing rapidly as new technology calls for ever-higher skills. To qualify for the high-growth, higher-paying occupations generated in the global economy, the South's workers must constantly augment their skills and increase their knowledge. Increasingly the question will be asked of Southerners wanting to move up the career ladder: What did you learn lately?

"The State of the South 2000." MDC, Inc.

b. Some Recommendations Proposed by these Authors

- Establish "skill clinics" in every large community and worksite. These clinics will allow people to find out how their present skills compare with those they would like to have – or that they need for a particular job and where they can acquire the skills and knowledge they still need.

- Develop work-based learning alternatives for non-college-bound youth to help them effec tively make the transition from school to a meaningful career path.

- Provide additional incentives to encourage employers to increase the training of workers and to adopt structured work-based training programs.

- Recognize that community colleges can help prepare our people for the global economy, but only if we give them the status and resources it takes to do the job.

- "Cultivate Brainpower." Cultivate the brainpower of every child in the South; cultivate the brainpower of men and women already in the workforce! Cultivate it early, cultivate in often! It's not just more jobs we need, it's better jobs. Brainpower is the avenue to get them.

- The South must change how it thinks about education, recognizing the necessity for continuous learning in a highly competitive global economy. . . We must provide education and training that enables people of all ages and walks of life to navigate the changing world of work.

- We must enable rural communities to make the transition from a natural resource and low-end manufacturing economy to the digital age. Connecting rural areas to economic activity, be it to a nearby economic center or to a burgeoning sector of the new economy, is critical to rural economic survival and requires rural communities to collaborate regionally for success.

II. THE EDUCATION OF OUR YOUTH

a. Problems/Issues

While we spend as much per student as almost any country in the world, American students are at or near the back of the pack in international comparisons. If we don't make radical changes, that is where they are going to stay.

"America 2000: An Education Strategy." Youth Policy Journal.

The second Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa poll of teachers' attitudes toward the public schools pointed out that "parents lack of interest/support" led the teachers' list of the biggest problems facing the public schools. Parents, not educators, bear the primary responsibility for the faults and failures in educating our youth within our present public-school system. We have witnessed a preoccupation with dropout prevention programs during this decade of school reform without seriously considering the alternative of letting the student quit and allowing teachers to devote their efforts to working with students who have assumed responsibility for their education.

"Our Public Schools are a Mess." Donald M. Clark

Rural America's human capital has been falling, mainly through the export of its young people to urban and suburban areas. While this trend is not new, new steps are needed to stem that tide if rural America is to tap more economic opportunities, especially since knowledge-based industries figure so prominently in the new economy.

"New Directions for U.S. Rural Policy." Center for the Study of Rural America, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City

As we consider the people facing difficulties, we must pay special attention to children. If you take one lesson in economic development away from this report, it should be this: In the years ahead, effective education for everyone will drive our economy, and effective education begins with a family and their children before birth.

1998 Commission on the Future of the South

b. Some Recommendations Proposed by These Authors

- Develop a more responsive academic and vocational education programs that better meet the needs of all students, particularly in preparing them for productive work.

- It's time for parents to get their act together and help educators by reinforcing the mission of the school at home and by monitoring their youngster's progress.

- To plan and implement substantive school reform. . ., other stakeholders (such as business, industry, government, and labor) -- the employment community -- must collaborate with education in a formal broad-based alliance over the long term.

- If we want to compete for the sophisticated jobs in the future, we need to invest more heavily in our technical schools, colleges and universities.

- If we want to make sure our workforce is prepared for what's coming, there's not better place to start then responsible parenthood, quality childcare and early childhood education.

- There are four steps that can be considered for boosting rural human capital. These are: utilizing distance education to build the human capital of the existing workforce, strengthen the rural education system to raise educational outcomes for rural youth, import new human capital through the 21st equivalent of the Homestead Act, and create a rural environment that will better attract and retain people with high human capital.

III. GROUP ACTIVITY

Now, either as an entire group or as smaller groups of 5 to 7 people, discuss your thoughts and reactions to the problems that these authors have identified both for our workforce and the education of our youth. Consider the following questions:

a. Do you agree with the issues identified? Are there other related issues/problems that need to be considered? If yes, what are they?

b. What are your reactions/opinions of the strategies being proposed? What specific strategies would you see as worthy of consideration?

To give your group enough time to debate these problems and strategies, you may want to have part of the group deal with the workforce issues and the remainder of the group address the education of our youth problem. Allow some time at the end of this activity to share each group's thoughts and recommendations on the topic with which they dealt.

Table 1. The Educational Status of Persons 25 Years of Age and Older in 13 Southern States, 1990 and 1998.

	Highest level of education completed in 1990 (in percent).						1998 Educational Attainment.		
Southern State	Not a HS grad	HS grad only	Some college	Associate's degree	Bachelor's degree	Advanced degree	Percent who are dropouts	HS grad or more	College or more
Alabama	33.1	29.4	16.8	5.0	10.1	5.5	12.6	78.8	20.6
Arkansas	33.7	32.7	16.6	3.7	8.9	4.5	11.4	76.8	16.2
Florida	25.6	30.1	19.4	6.6	12.0	6.3	14.3	81.9	22.5
Georgia	29.1	29.6	17.0	5.0	12.9	6.4	14.1	80.0	20.7
Kentucky	35.4	31.8	15.2	4.1	8.1	5.5	13.3	77.9	20.1
Louisiana	31.7	31.7	17.2	3.3	10.5	5.6	12.5	78.6	19.5
Mississippi	35.7	27.5	16.9	5.2	9.7	5.1	11.8	77.3	19.5
North Carolina	30.0	29.0	16.8	6.8	12.0	5.4	12.5	81.4	23.3
Oklahoma	25.4	30.5	21.3	5.0	11.8	6.0	10.4	84.6	20.5

Table 1. The Educational Status of Persons 25 Years of Age and Older in 13 Southern States, 1990 and 1998.

South Carolina	31.7	29.5	15.8	6.3	11.2	5.4	11.7	78.6	21.3
Tennessee	32.9	30.0	16.9	4.2	10.5	5.4	13.4	76.9	16.9
Texas	27.9	25.6	21.1	5.2	13.9	6.5	12.9	78.3	23.3
Virginia	24.8	26.6	18.5	5.5	15.4	9.1	10.0	82.6	30.3
United States	24.8	30.0	18.7	6.2	13.1	7.2	11.2	82.8	24.4

Table 2. The Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years Old and Over by Race/Ethnicity in the Southern States in 1990.

Southern State	Percent with a HS Diploma or More				Percent with Bachelors' Degree or More			
	Overall	White	Black	Hispanics	Overall	White	Black	Hispanics
Alabama	66.9	70.3	54.6	73.8	15.7	17.3	9.3	20.1
Arkansas	66.3	68.6	51.5	59.1	13.3	14.1	8.4	11.1
Florida	74.4	77.0	56.4	57.2	18.3	19.3	9.8	14.2
Georgia	70.9	74.9	58.6	66.2	19.3	21.8	11.0	20.5
Kentucky	64.6	64.7	61.7	74.0	13.6	13.9	7.7	18.9
Louisiana	68.3	74.2	53.1	67.6	16.1	18.7	9.1	16.6
Mississippi	64.3	71.7	47.3	67.7	14.7	17.2	8.8	17.1
North Carolina	70.0	73.1	58.1	71.0	17.4	19.3	9.5	17.9
Oklahoma	74.6	75.7	70.1	55.9	17.8	18.7	12.0	10.5
South Carolina	68.3	73.6	53.3	71.8	16.6	19.8	7.6	19.8
Tennessee	67.1	68.2	59.4	71.5	16.0	16.7	10.2	21.9
Texas	72.1	76.2	66.1	44.6	20.3	22.6	12.0	7.3
Virginia	75.2	78.3	60.3	70.5	24.5	27.0	11.1	22.4
United States	75.2	77.9	63.1	49.8	20.3	21.5	11.4	9.2

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Table 3. Public Elementary and Secondary School Finances in Southern States in 1998.

Southern State	Revenue Receipts by Source (in Millions of Dollars)				Per Capita Expenditures in Dollars [1]
	Total	Federal	State	Local	
Alabama	4,030	380	2,601	1,049	1,011
Arkansas	2,322	193	1,536	594	1,008
Florida	14,583	1,058	7,068	6,457	1,074
Georgia	8,580	563	4,485	3,531	1,291
Kentucky	3,882	290	2,563	1,029	979
Louisiana	4,251	511	2,117	1,623	951
Mississippi	2,503	326	1,423	755	939
North Carolina	7,128	506	4,690	1,932	1,013
Oklahoma	3,119	302	1,951	866	943
South Carolina	4,157	312	2,176	1,668	1,077
Tennessee	4,491	356	2,314	1,822	902
Texas	23,920	1,833	10,282	11,805	1,346
Virginia	6,662	362	2,469	3,831	1,132
United States	314,187	21,338	155,321	137,528	1,210

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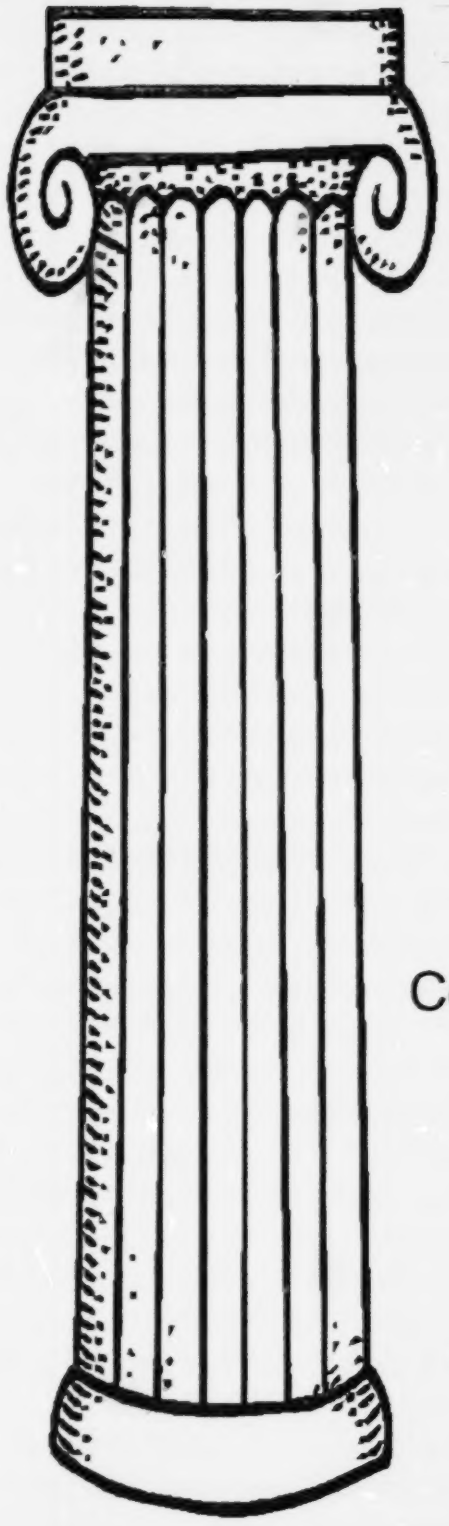
[1]The figure represents the amount spent on a per resident basis, not on a per student basis



Community Choices

Public Policy Education Program

Module Six

Migration's Impact on the Community's Human Resources

Glenn D. Israel
University of Florida

July 2001

SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER
SRDC

Module

Migration's Impact on the Community's Human Resources

Objectives

After completing the workshop, participants will be able to do the following:

- Understand migration trends in terms of quantity and quality;
- Compare migration trends across metro and nonmetro areas of the U.S. and by region;
- Examine migration trends in the South;
- Understand factors affecting migration decisions;
- Identify policy options regarding migration patterns.

Preparation

- Read all the materials in the module. Become familiar with the comments of the overview paper and overhead masters.
- Collect data for your state, county, or community to complement those already included in the module for use in your presentation and in the activities. Use the overview paper, overhead masters, and datasheets as a guide to identify the items of information that you might obtain. Including locality-specific data will increase interest and involvement by participants.
- Make sure that the proper equipment (for example, an overhead projector) and materials are ready for the workshop.

Procedures and Timeline

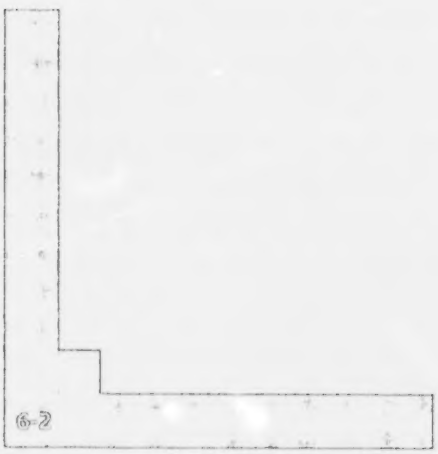
- Introduce topic using transparencies of the module's purpose and introduction (about 5 minutes).
- Conduct activity #1. The activity explores who moves into and out of cities and how that affects human resources (25-30 minutes).
- Using Power Point, discuss how participants can assess local migration patterns in greater detail and with precision; refer to overview paper. Make the point that assessing local migration patterns is like collecting clues to solve a murder mystery.
- Introduce migration terminology and discuss national and state migration trends using Power Point. Ask, "What are we talking about when we say migration?" Make the point that knowing information about national and state trends is important for developing a better understanding of local migration. Involve participants by asking them to define various terms and to interpret information from graphs of migration trends.
- Using transparencies, discuss why people move. Make the point that people move for both economic and quality of life reasons. Refer to background readings for added detail.
- Discuss the consequences for human resources in the light of certain migration patterns. Make the point that immigration of older persons can have both positive and negative effects on human resources and the quality of life in a community. Also note that the impact of a brain drain is limited in the short term but negative over the long term.
- Conduct activity #2 using the worksheet. The activity asks participants to examine their community's migration trends and changes in human resources, and then to brainstorm about policy options that can influence migration in and out of participants' communities (30 minutes).

Materials Needed

- Microsoft Power Point.
- Copies of Migration's Impact on the Community's Human Resources module.
- Copies of Activity # 1 and Activity #2 sheets.

Going Further... Things for Participants to Do

- Develop a draft factsheet of state and local migration trends and associated changes in human resources. Then refine, publish, and distribute the migration factsheet to leaders and interested citizens in the community.
- Organize and conduct town meetings to discuss the impact of migration on the community and what can be done to reduce negative impacts and increase positive impacts.
- Learn more about how state and federal policies, such as those relating to education, economic development, and other areas, affect migration patterns.



Migration's Impact on the Community's Human Resources

Glenn D. Israel
University of Florida

Introduction

If there is a constant in the life of American communities, it is that people move into and out of them. Some communities grow, some lose population, and some remain the same size, except that the faces change. This movement of people in and out of a community can change both the size and quality of the human resource base of that community. People who move carry their schooling, skills, and experience with them from their former community to their new place of residence. What this means for any particular community depends on who is moving in and out.

This module examines recent patterns of migration to provide a better understanding of how migration has influenced the human resource base of communities. In addition, this module helps participants identify some (but certainly not all) of the policy options that can influence the effects of migration on a community's human resources.

"Knowing the educational attainment, employment status, and income of people who move can tell us whether a community's human resource base is being strengthened or weakened."

A Starting Point: Defining Migration

Migration refers to the movement of people (with regard to their usual place of residence) into and out of a geographic area. The area may be a town, city, county, state, or nation. Comparison of people moving in and out is often made between two types of counties: metropolitan and non-metropolitan"(metro and nonmetro, respectively).

Inmigration is the flow of people into an area, while outmigration is the flow of people out of an area. Net migration refers to the number of people who move in minus the number who move out. Net migration is positive when inmigrants outnumber outmigrants. Conversely, net migration is negative when inmigrants are fewer than outmigrants.

So far we have only talked about how many people are moving in or out (the quantity), but we also want to know what kind of people are moving. The characteristics (or quality) of people who move are, in many ways, more important than the number of people who move. Indicators of the quality of migrants include educational attainment (years of schooling, degrees, and certification), labor force status, employment status, occupational category (for example, white collar workers), income, and poverty status [6].

Knowing the educational attainment, employment status, and income of people who move can tell us whether a community's human resource base

is being strengthened or weakened. If many people who are highly educated or employed as professionals move out of a community, this drains human resources that are available to fuel the local economy and run the local government. On the other hand, if people who are well educated or hold white collar jobs move into a community, the human resource base is enhanced.

Migration Patterns

America is a land of movers. People move from city to city, small town to small town, and to and from cities and small towns. During the last 50 years, the dominant migration trend has been the net outmigration of people from nonmetro counties (small towns and the rural countryside) to metro counties (cities and suburbs). This outmigration, which has included many of the youngest and most highly educated, has been due, in no small part, to the lack of quality rural jobs and better opportunities in larger urban areas [6].

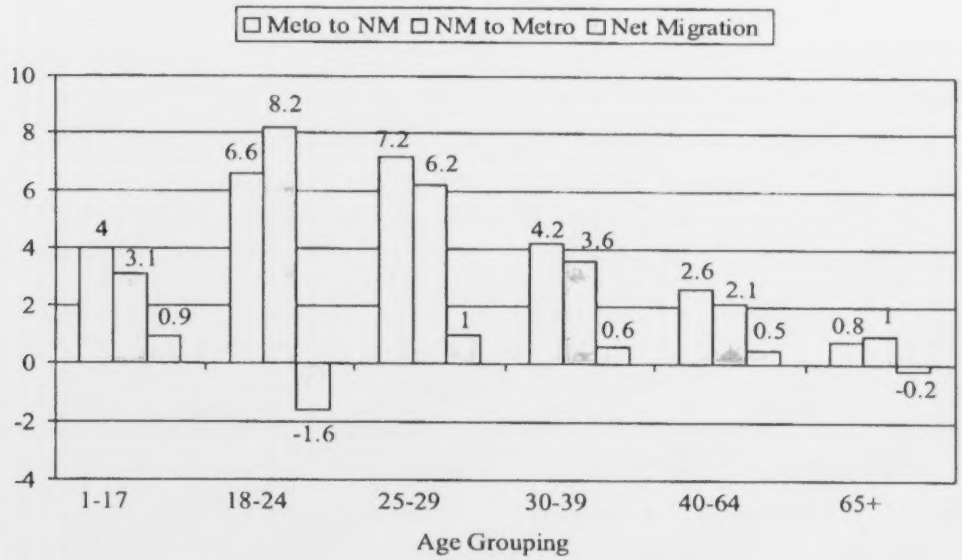
Although nonmetro net outmigration is characteristic of the nation as a whole, not all counties are losing people. While many nonmetro counties in the Midwest and Northeast lost population through outmigration during the 1980s and 1990s, others gained, especially coastal counties and areas with a 30 or more miles commute to a city (demographers call these exurban areas). In addition, rural counties with high levels of inmigration of retirement age persons were one of the fastest growing rural counties in America [4,10]. Areas with tourism and recreational opportunities also benefited from inmigration (both rural and urban counties) [4].

A Rural Brain Drain?

In many nonmetro areas over the past several decades, the typical trend has been the loss of the areas' best and brightest to the metro centers of the nation. Recent statistics seem to provide a more upbeat assessment regarding the success nonmetro areas have enjoyed with regard to their capacity to keep or attract individuals with good human capital attributes.

According to Cromartie (1), over the March 1997 to March 1999 time period, about 3.3 million people moved out of nonmetro areas of the U.S., while some 3.9 million move to the country's nonmetro areas. Despite this reasonably healthy gain in population, not all age categories realized gains over the two year period. For example, nonmetro areas experienced an average annual loss of 1.6 percent of its 18-24 year old population as a result of net migration. In particular, about 8.2 percent moved from nonmetro to metro areas, while 6.6 percent moved from metro to nonmetro areas of the U.S. on an annual basis between 1997 and 1999. However, expansion occurred in nearly all other age categories, including those under 18 years of age, and persons 25-29, 30-39, and 40-64 years of age (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Average Annual Percentage of Metro/Nonmetro Residents who Moved, by Age, 1997-99



Source: John B. Cromartie, Rural Conditions and Trends, Volume 11(2). 2000.

While on an overall basis, nonmetro areas experienced population growth, such growth did not occur on a uniform basis across all regions of the United States.

As Figure 2 reveals, nonmetro areas of the Northeast continued to experience a loss in its population base as a result of net migration. The Midwest region, while suffering losses in its nonmetro population during the 1995-97 period, experienced a significant population rebound after 1997. While showing remarkable growth during the 1995-96 time period, nonmetro net migration deteriorated in the West. By 1998-99, the West was experiencing the greatest decline in its rate of population decline due to net migration than was the case in any other region of the country. Finally, the South proved to be the only region that realized a net gain in its nonmetro population over the course of the 1995-99 period of time.

What is particularly important to nonmetro areas is the extent to which they may have experienced improvements in the educational credentials of their population. A more educated workforce offers nonmetro areas a better chance of capturing quality employers that can offer workers decent wages. On an annual basis (over the 1997-99 period), nonmetro areas were able to limit the outmigration of its best educated to metro areas of the country (see Figure 3). In fact, nonmetro areas attracted a slightly larger proportion of college educated persons than they loss due to outmigration to metro areas. However, the difference proved to be very small (a + 0.2 annual rate of gain for nonmetro areas). Although not sizable, these figures suggest that nonmetro areas were able to hold their own in terms of retaining a larger share of the best educated residents.

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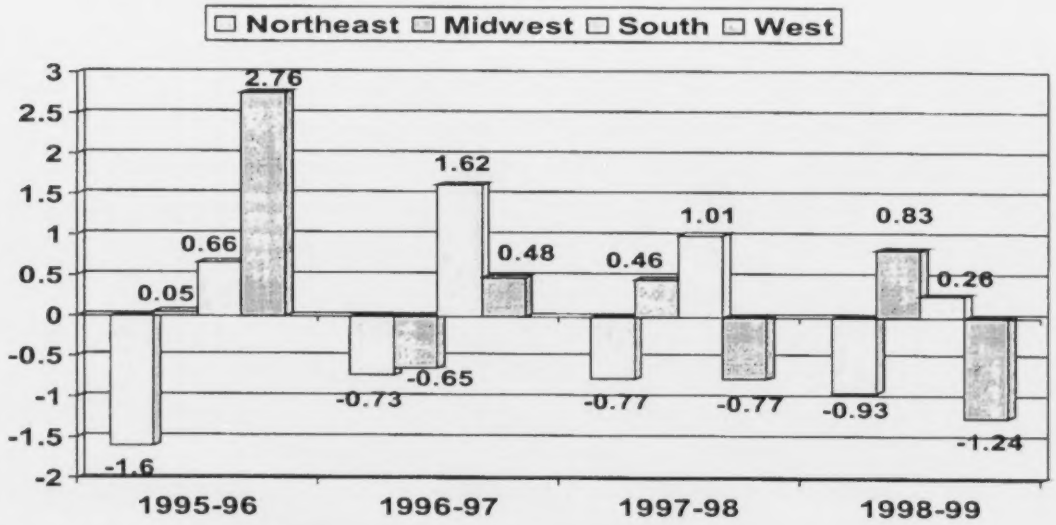
Figure 2. Nonmetro net migration by region, 1995-99



Source: John B. Cromartie, Rural Conditions and Trends, Volume 11(2), 2000

At the same time, net migration of "high school only" or "less than high school" educated persons was considerably higher in nonmetro versus metro areas of the country between 1997-99. This indicates that nonmetro areas were expanding their pool of less educated residents at a faster pace then were metro areas of the U.S. on an annual basis over the 1997-99 time period. Particularly problematic for many nonmetro areas is the fact that many of these individuals may lack the training and skills needed to compete for better paying jobs. As such, they will either end up securing lower-end, poor paying jobs, or they will find themselves unemployed for extended periods of time.

Migration Trends in the South

The South grew by nearly 15 million people during the 1990s (see *Migration Datasheet*: Census South table on "Population Change for States in the South," 1980-2000). Nearly 68 percent of that growth was concentrated in the states of Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and Texas. Every state in the South, with the exception of the District of Columbia, experienced a population expansion during the decade of the 1990s. Overall, the region grew by 17.3 percent from 1990 to 2000, while the West expanded at a slightly faster pace 19.7 percent. However, the numerical change in the population was substantially higher in the South than in the West (14.8 million people in the South vs. 10.4 million in the West). As for the Northeast and Midwest regions of the country, their percentage growth in population was far less sizable than those of the South or West (5.5 percent and 7.9 percent, respectively).

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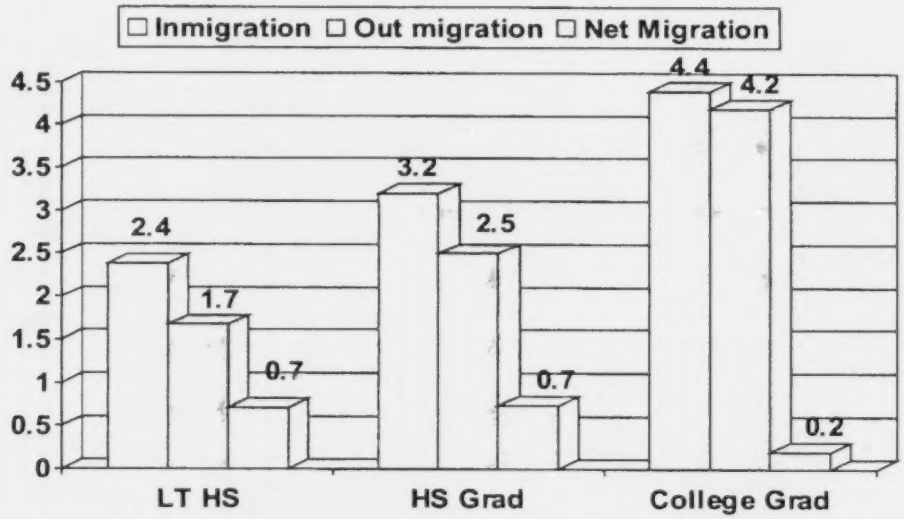
Figure 3. Average annual rates to nonmetro areas, by education, 1997-99



Source: John B. Cromartie, Rural Conditions and Trends, Volume 11(2), 2000

Overall, population growth varied widely between the states in the South. For example, Georgia's population grew a healthy 26.4 percent during the 1990s, followed by Florida at 23.5 percent. At the other end of the spectrum, growth was negligible in West Virginia over the 1990-2000 period (0.8 percent) and less than 6 percent in Louisiana (8). One of the most startling statistics emerging from the 2000 Census, however, was the rapid growth that occurred in the region's Hispanic population. While numbering nearly 6.8 million people in 1990, the Hispanic population grew to nearly 11.6 million persons by 2000, an increase of almost 42 percent. The African American population of the South also experienced a sizable expansion over the decade of the 1990s. Approximately 15.8 million African Americans lived in the South in 1990. By 2000, the figure had grown to almost 19 million individuals (about a 20 percent growth over a period of ten years). So, what the decade of the 1990s brought to the South was an expanding population that had become increasingly more diversified with regard to race and ethnic background.

As noted earlier, population changes in every state can be affected by migration patterns. In Figure 4, we show the factors that were associated with the expansion of the South's population over the 1990-99 time period. Over 48 percent of the region's growth over the 1990-99 period was associated with natural increase — the difference in the number of births minus the number of deaths occurring in the South between these two periods of time (1990 and 1999). At the same time, over 51 percent of the South's population expansion was linked to net migration, both internationally and

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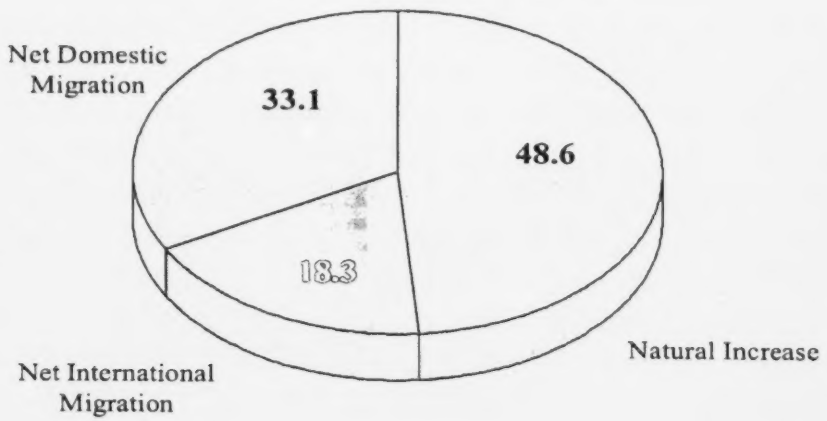
domestically. Net international migration represents the difference between migration to the South from an area outside the United States and migration from the South to an area outside the United States. It represented 18.3 percent of the region's growth during the 1990s. Net domestic migration is the difference between domestic in-migration to the South and domestic out-migration from the South over the 1990-99 time period Over one-third of the South's population expansion during the decade of the 1990s was linked to net domestic migration.

Figure 4. Components of Population Change in the South, 1990-99



Source: Population Estimates Program, Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau

"Recent data reveal that the nonmetro South has improved its track record with regard to retaining or attracting people with good human resource credentials."

Human Resource Flows in the Rural South

During the period of the 1980s, many areas of the South experienced net declines in its human resources, losing some of its best and brightest to other regions of the country. This was especially evident among those 20-29 years of age and persons with higher levels of education. And in no place was the outflow of young and educated persons more evident than in the nonmetro areas of the South.

Now, just over a decade later, a renewed hope has emerged in the rural South. Recent data reveal that the nonmetro South has improved its track record with regard to retaining or attracting people with good human resource credentials. In fact, a recent study by Nord and Cromartie (7) notes that the nonmetro areas of the region experienced a positive net gain in its prime working age population (26-30 and 31-40 years of age) as a product of migration. As Table 1 reveals, the average net migration to the nonmetro South over the 1995-97 period was positive across all age categories (an annual rate of 1.4). Expansion was particularly pronounced among those under 18 years of age, the 26-30 and 41-64 age categories.

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Gains were further uncovered in the proportion of the nonmetro residents with some college, or with a bachelor's degree or higher. Over the 1995-97 span of time, the net migration rate into the nonmetro South averaged 0.8 per year (0.7 net domestic migration rate plus 0.1 international migration rate). The figure stood at 0.6 for those with some college education and 1.6 for individuals with a terminal high school degree.

On the other side of the coin, growth did occur in some areas that are not entirely positive for the nonmetro South. For example, the highest net migration rates into nonmetro areas of the South occurred among those with incomes below the poverty line and persons whose incomes placed them just slightly above the official poverty line (7). At the upper tier of the income ladder, nonmetro areas suffered a small net loss in the number of persons with the high income levels (i.e., those with incomes four times above the poverty line).

While the 1990s has brought positive shifts in the human resource base of many rural areas of the South, it is hard to predict what the future will hold. Will its human resources show improvement as was the case over the decade of the 1990s, or will the outflow the area's best and brightest begin anew as was the case in the 1970s and 1980s? What is certain is that without a commitment to attracting or creating good jobs that demand workers with decent educations or skills, and that offer workers attractive salaries/wages, nonmetro areas of the South will be hard pressed to retain and attract people with higher educational levels. The continued acceleration of quality jobs in the metro areas of the region may prove simply too attractive for well-educated rural Southerners.

"The continued acceleration of quality jobs in the metro areas of the region may prove simply too attractive for well-educated rural Southerners."

Consequences of Migration

For communities with net outmigration, especially brain drain, the prospects for a vibrant economy do not appear bright. Outmigration reduces the base for economic growth. Moreover, a brain drain deprives the community of many of the individuals who have the potential to make the greatest difference for creating growth in the local economy.

David McGranahan, Linda Ghelfi [6] and other human capital researchers urge caution in stating the effect of the brain drain on local economic development. They point out that research does not support the view that education (or human capital development) is the only factor influencing job creation and economic development in a community; they are also influenced by the restructuring of the global and national economy. On the other hand, research shows that education and training have a strong influence on an individual's job opportunities and future income.

Table 1. Characteristics of migrants to and from the nonmetro South (Annual Average 1995-97)

Characteristic	Domestic immigration rate	Domestic outmigration rate	Net domestic migration rate	International immigration rate
		In percent		
Overall	4.2	2.8	1.4	0.1
Age				
1-17 years old	5.3	2.7	2.6	0.2
18-25	6.6	5.9	0.7	0.3
26-30	8.2	5.6	2.6	0.
31-40	4.3	3.9	0.5	0.2
41-64	2.6	1.3	1.3	0.1
65 +	1.3	0.9	0.4	--
Education 1q(25 + years old)				
Less than H.S.	2.4	1.5	0.9	0.1
HS graduate	3.5	2.0	1.5	0.1
Some college	3.7	3.1	0.6	--
Bachelor's +	4.8	4.1	0.7	0.1
Income				
Below poverty line	5.3	3.8	1.5	0.3
1-2 times poverty line	5.0	2.4	2.6	0.2
2-3 times poverty line	3.7	2.4	1.3	--
3-4 times poverty line	3.2	2.1	1.2	--
Above 4 times poverty line	2.9	3.2	-0.3	0.1
Race/Ethnicity				
White, non-Hispanic	4.3	2.9	1.4	--
Black	3.0	2.3	0.7	--
Hispanic	6.5	2.3	4.2	1.2

Source: Mark Nord and John Cromartie, Southern Rural Sociology, Volume 16, 2000.

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The consequences of net inmigration of primarily retirement-age persons can be mixed. On the one hand, the presence of older migrants can increase demand for goods and services, which can create jobs and bring income into these communities. In many respects, retirees can add much to the local economy [7]. At the same time, immigrating retirees can have different values than long-term residents, thereby increasing conflict in addressing community issues such as funding for public education [10].

Older immigrants may offset human resource losses from outmigration of young adults in some ways. Many older immigrants bring a wealth of skills and experience to their communities. Moreover, many older persons become very involved in their communities through volunteering or part-time employment. But a smaller proportion of older immigrants are employed full-time than younger immigrants. If older immigrants are employed, the length of time that they participate in the labor force is limited. Long-term economic growth might be more modest than when highly educated or skilled young adults participate in the labor force for many years.

Reasons Why People Move

Research indicates that people move for a variety of reasons. The two dominant factors are quality of life and economics, but the reasons change during different stages of the life cycle. Much of the rural brain drain is attributed to the lack of job opportunities for well-educated people in nonmetro counties, especially in the management, professional, and technical fields [8]. Likewise, opportunities for advancement usually involve changing jobs from one company to another, which requires a residential change in nonmetro areas more frequently than it does in metro areas [8].

Although single young adults have few constraints to keep them from pursuing job opportunities in urban areas, others face serious obstacles. Middle-aged persons with families, as well as home or business owners, are somewhat constrained in moving. Cutting one's roots, selling a home, or liquidating a business can make the moving process more costly. Once people have settled, the economic or quality of life benefits of a move must be significantly higher than the costs for a move to occur.

Among older persons, non-economic considerations play a larger role in migration decisions. Many of these people are financially secure, so factors such as climate, family, recreation, environment, small town/big city preferences, and so on, play a larger role. It should be no surprise, then, that many Southern states have attracted so many older persons who are in search of warm climate and sunny beaches.

Assessing Local Migration Patterns

Unfortunately, there is no easy way to find out what the migration trends

are for individual communities. Data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census provides some insight about migration trends. Community or county-level data can be obtained from the Census of Population. And while data from the Current Population Survey's Demographic Profile are useful for national and regional studies, this information is too sparse for use at the substate level. Where does this leave us?

Assessing your community's migration trends becomes somewhat like solving a murder mystery. You will need to proceed in two ways: 1) sift through available published data; and 2) integrate information and observations that knowledgeable, local people have about people who are coming and going.

"Older inmigrants may offset human resource losses from outmigration of young adults in some ways."

One place to start is by reviewing population data that are available through your state's data center or public universities. You can easily get information about current population, population change, net migration, and so on. If you find that your city or county population is declining and your community has net outmigration, you have pretty good evidence not only that your human resource base is shrinking, but that you probably are losing many of your best and brightest young people. If you find that your community is growing as a result of net immigration (a common occurrence in certain states including Florida and Georgia), then you probably will want to find out if the attributes of newcomers compensate for those lost from people who leave.

Once you have reviewed the available data, you can fill in some of the remaining blanks by talking with people who are knowledgeable about people who move in or out of town. High school guidance counselors, principals and school board members should know the approximate number of students who leave to go to college or vocational school. You can ask questions like, "How many academic honor students are going to college?" and "Do they come back after college?"

You can also contact some of the larger businesses in your community to find out whom they have been hiring over the last few years. Questions you could ask might include, "What skills or educational background do you look for in new hires?" or "Do you recruit most of your new employees from out-of-town?" The answers provided by school officials and employers can help you assess whether your community has brain drain.

You might also talk with real estate agents to find out about the types of people who are moving into the community. Real estate and rental agents are among the first to come into contact with people who are planning to move or who are in the process of moving to your community. Because they deal face-to-face with newcomers, real estate or rental agents should be able to describe their clientele in some detail - young or old, or wealthy or of modest income. They may even be able to

make an assessment of the educational level and occupational status of the newcomers with whom they deal. Real estate agents also can help describe what types of people are moving out of the community. The information provided by real estate agents can help you assess whether your community has a brain gain and whether it is adding younger inmigrants.

Policy Options

Given that migration, especially by young adults, can have substantial impact on a community's human resource base, several questions arise, such as "What can we do to keep people here?" "What can we do to attract new people to replace those who have left?" "Should we do anything to try to influence people moving in or out?"

"Assessing your community's migration trends thus becomes somewhat like solving a murder mystery."

These questions suggest that there is a range of policy options, which might include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Do nothing. An advantage is that no time or effort is expended. A disadvantage is that the community may continue to experience undesirable trends or miss opportunities to improve its human resource base.

- Shift the educational curriculum in the schools to better match the skills needed by the local labor market [6]. This policy would provide the local economy with a larger labor pool to use for expansion and make students more competitive in the local labor market. However, no one should expect that such a strategy will meet the needs of or benefit all students.

- Develop community programs to either retain "high resource" young adults in the community or to attract them back after they complete their education. Efforts to help young adults better appreciate their community and their "roots" may increase retention or return rates among those who are willing to trade income for quality of life considerations. Efforts to attract colleges graduates may have very limited success because of the small number of job opportunities requiring technical skills in nonmetro areas.

- Attract high resource inmigrants, especially those young to middle-age, by marketing your community to specific groups of people to "sell" your community as a great place to live. Some communities are already marketing themselves to older persons, so targeting people with specific human resource attributes needed by your community also may succeed. People who work in jobs amenable to telecommuting might be good candidates for this strategy.

- Another way to attract inmigrants might be to offer incentives for professionals in high demand who might not, otherwise, locate in your community. For example, some communities have resorted to

paying for medical school for a doctor in exchange for that doctor moving his/her practice to the community.

- Enhance the human capital of those who stay through job training programs, employer training programs, and adult education.

- Lobby for changes in state or federal policies that affect migration. State and federal policies have affected the movement of people over the years in numerous ways. For example, the Homestead Act was used to encourage people to move to many western states. Likewise, new incentives, such as tax deductions for people who move to nonmetro areas, or disincentives, such as higher fees in metro areas, could be offered to encourage the redistribution of human resources.

These are just a few of the many options from which a community can choose. Through a public policy process of identifying alternatives, assessing consequences, and making choices, your community can influence migration trends that impact its human resource base.

Concluding Remarks

Migration can have a profound impact on the human resource base in your community or county. Unfortunately, few people pay attention to who comes or goes in their community and what it means for their human resource base, let alone try to affect migration's role in changing human resources. This module has sought to provide information that you can use to more fully understand how migration impacts your community. With this knowledge, you can better study and select policy options that are likely to have positive impacts on your community.

*A metropolitan county is defined as a) a county with a central city of 50,000 or more residents, b) one of a pair of counties with 50,000 urban residents between them and a total population of at least 100,000, or c) a smaller county that is economically or socially integrated with an adjacent urban nucleus. All other counties are defined as nonmetropolitan. For purposes of this module, the use of the word "rural" was used to represent nonmetro areas of the South.

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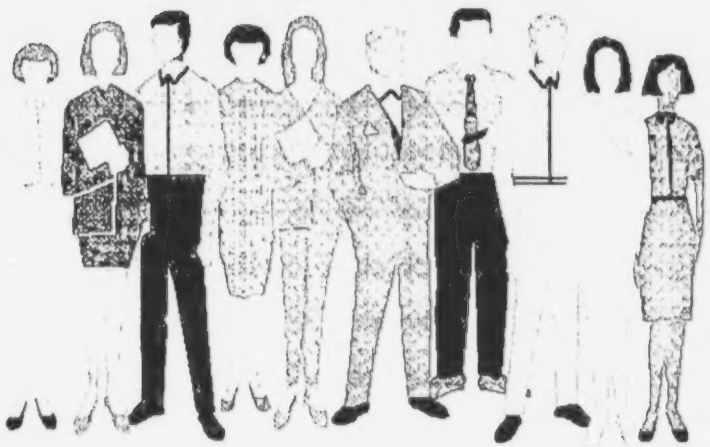
Module Six Instructor's Guide

Migration's Impact on the Community's Human Resources

Small Group Activities



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Identifying Your Community's Migration Pattern
Activity #1

Time: 25 to 30 minutes

Materials Needed

- Flip chart
- Markers
- Masking tape

Purpose

- To introduce the idea of migration's connection to local human resources and economic development by exploring the size and quality (characteristics) of flows of people moving in and out and to present a method for describing local migration patterns.

Procedures

- Introduce the activity.
- Get a volunteer to record information on the flip chart.
- Conduct Part 1 of the migration discussion patterns for one or more communities using the questions listed below (recommended 2 or 3 communities or counties).
- Record information about a community on the flip chart, then tape each sheet of paper (one per community or county) on the wall.
- Continue discussion (Part 2) by comparing participant's perceptions of human resource gains or losses for the community(ies).

Introduction (Sample Script)

To understand how migration relates to the human resource base in our community, I want you to think about what is happening in you community. Let's take a few minutes to talk about who's moving in and who's moving out and what difference it makes.

Discussion (Part 1)

Q. How many people are moving into your community (or county)? Moving out?

Q. What kind of people are moving in? (Probes: educational level, job skills, type of occupation, age, income or wealth, etc.)

Q. Do immigrants contribute to the labor force? Why or why not?

Q. What kind of people are moving out? (Probes: educational level, job skills, type of occupation, age, income or wealth, etc.)

Q. Do outmigrants drain skills or expertise from the labor force? Why or why not?

Discussion (Part 2)

Q. How do these communities (counties) compare with regard to what's happening to their human resources?

Identifying Your Community's Migration Pattern
Activity #2

Time: 35 to 40 minutes

Materials Needed

- Worksheet
- Pencils

Purpose

- To apply the public policy model to the topic of migration by exploring migration's effect on local human resources in terms of the size and characteristics of people moving in and out, identifying issues of concern that might result from specific migration patterns and identifying policy alternatives and consequences.

Procedures

- Introduce the activity and distribute copies of the worksheet.
- Divide participants into groups of 5-7 people.
- Distribute data that may help groups to assess migration patterns and/ or changes in human resources.
- Convene groups and have each group develop answers to the questions on the worksheet (20-25 minutes).
- After the groups have completed their responses on the worksheet, have a representative from each group present their findings to the reassembled group and answer questions from other participants.

Introduction (Sample Script)

Please break into groups of 5-7 people. Each group will apply the policy model that we discussed earlier. Remember, this model asks you to identify an issue of concern, in this case one that emerges from examination of the migration trends for a community or country. It also asks you to identify policy alternatives and consequences.

Use the worksheet to guide your thinking and to write down answers to the questions. Each group will need to select a community or county, preferably not one that we discussed in Activity #1. Each group also needs to select a reporter to present the group's findings.

Identifying Policy Options to Address Migration's Impact

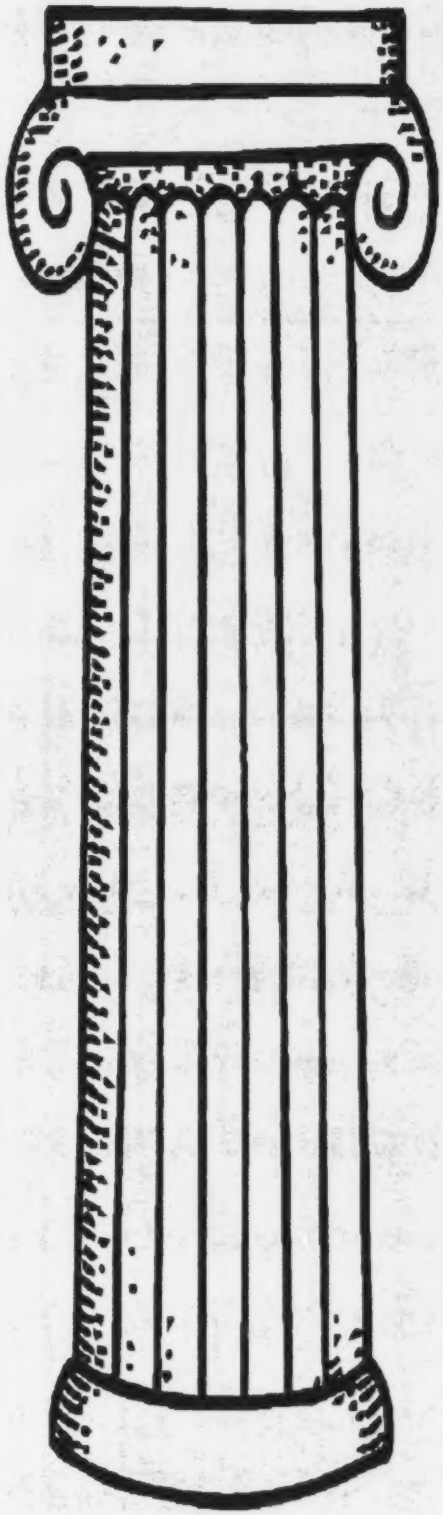
Worksheet

1. Identify the migration pattern of your selected county or community.
   a. How many people are moving in? Moving out?
   b. What are the characteristics of inmigrants? Outmigrants?
   c. How are local human resources affected?

2. Identify an issue of concern relating to human resources that is based on the county's migration trends.

3. Identify three or more alternative policies directly affecting migration to or from your community to address negative impacts, if any, or to reinforce positive impacts.

4. Selecting one alternative, identify benefits and costs (consequences). Who benefits, who pays?



Community Choices

Public Policy Education Program

Module Seven

Human Resources and the Family

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July 2001

SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER
SRDC

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Module Seven Instructor's Guide

Human Resources and the Family

Objectives

- To review the definitions of family.
- To describe key characteristics of families today.
- To discuss the role of families in relation to their human resource development functions.
- To develop an appreciation of the importance of making community investments in families.
- To develop strategies for strengthening families.

Procedures and Timeline

- Present background information on the role of families, including the changing demographic characteristics of families, and the human resource development role (educational performance and career aspirations) that families perform for their children. This session seeks to evaluate the families' capacity to accomplish their human resource development function and to explore strategies that can help families in carrying out such a function. (About 30 minutes.)
- Incorporate any of the following small group activities. Do as many of these activities as time will permit.
  - Review definitions of family as presented in the overview. Overheads on definitions and the Newsweek/Gallup Poll are provided. Do Activity #1 or an alternate that you develop. (About 20 minutes)
  - Examine beliefs about families how they may affect policy on children and families. Activity #2 is designed to compare the groups' beliefs with those reported in a national pool. Discuss similarities and differences. (About 20 minutes)
  - Present Activity #3. Ask the whole group to list current local programs designed to assist families in performing their roles as human resource developers. (About 20 minutes)
  - Have each person complete the *Family Friendly Community Checklist* (Activity #4). When each person has completed the checklist and has calculated the Family Friendly nature of their community, the individuals should be asked to share their results. This can be done with the entire group or in smaller groups. Have the participants work as teams in completing the final three questions that deal with strategies for strengthening the family friendly nature of their community. (About 40 minutes)

Materials Needed

- Handouts needed for Activities #1, 2, 3 and 4.
- Overhead projector, markers, overhead pens, tape, blackboard or newsprint
- Overhead Transparencies of the Newsweek/Gallup Poll

Human Resources and the Family: The Roles and Functions of Families

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The American family has undergone significant changes in the last few decades. The perception of many people is that the health of families has weakened. In part, the concern tends to be linked to the fact many family situations today deviate from the traditional view regarding family composition—one that includes the presence of both parents in the home, and a mother who stays at home to rear the children. While many continue to embrace this image of the traditional family, in reality, it falls short of being the dominant family type present in today's society. In fact, only a quarter of all families in the U.S. fit this popular imagery of the American family.

In this module, we examine some of the current definitions of families and describe some of their key characteristics. In addition, we highlight recent data that help profile the various family arrangements existing in the U.S. and South today. Next, we give specific attention to the significant roles that families play in the development of human resources – through child-rearing and other complementary activities. Finally, we present some of the strategies that have been proposed to further strengthen the ability of parents to carry out their key human resource development function.

Accompanying this overview document is a set of activities and powerpoint documents. They have been incorporated into this module in order to engage groups in a discussion of local issues affecting families, in an examination of alternatives strategies for assisting families, in an assessment of potential consequences associated with these alternatives, and putting in place an implementation plan that is modeled after the public policy education framework outlined in Module One.

"Children learn beliefs, values and behaviors in the family context. These give them an educational orientation that defines the kind of career preparation they will receive."

Definitions

An appropriate beginning point for this module is to undertake an examination of what is meant by the word "family." Unfortunately, finding a common definition of "family" is far an easy task. Tax bills, welfare and insurance payments, adoption procedures, and other events can all be dependent on how family is defined.

"Most reports tell us that the family had changed significantly since the period of the 1970s... fewer than 10 percent of Americans live in the traditional male-headed, male breadwinner household."

How the Family is Viewed:

- A household, including servants as well as kin of the householder (Webster's Dictionary of the English Language).
- Two or more persons related by birth, marriage or adoption who reside in the same household (U.S. Census Bureau).
- Exclusivity and longevity of a relationship; the level of emotional and financial commitment; how a couple conducts their everyday lives and holds themselves out to society; and the reliance placed upon one another for daily services (New York State Supreme Court. Note the absence of blood or legal tie through marriage or adoption).
- Measured by the functions it performs for its members; maintains the physical health and safety of members; helps shape a belief system of goals and values; teaches social skills; and creates a place for recuperation from external stresses (State of California Task Force on the Future of the Family).

These definitions offer evidence of the divergent ways in which families are being considered in today's society.

What Are Families Like Today?

Most reports tell us that the family has changed significantly since the period of the 1970s. This fact is most apparent when one realizes that fewer than 10 percent of Americans live in the traditional male-headed, male breadwinner household. One is more likely to find families in the 1990s who are either headed by two parents working outside the home, or by single mothers employed in the labor force. The economic need to have both parents working, as well as the larger number of people who are experiencing divorces, are among the factors that have contributed to these changes.

Statistics paint an interesting picture of today's families. More than 50 percent of marriages that began during the 1980s are likely to end in divorce [1]. Of white children, 40 percent reach age 17 without two biological parents in the home. For African American children, the figure is twice that number. Table 1 begins to offer a good view of the various family environments in which children find themselves today, and how family arrangements have changed since 1980. On an overall basis, the number of children under 18 years old living in a family with both parents present has decreased from 77 percent in 1980 to 68 percent today. Two-parent families are highest among whites in 1998 (68 percent), followed by Hispanics (64 percent). Slightly over one-third of African American children under 18 years of age have both parents present in the home (36 percent). In fact, 51 percent of these children reside in 'Mother Only" households.

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Table 1. Children Under 18 Years Old, by Presence of Parents, 1980-1998

Race and Hispanic Origin, by Year	Number (in 1,000)	Percent Living With...							
		Both Parents	Mother Only					Father Only	Neither Parent
			Total	Divorced	Married, spouse absent	Never Married	Widowed		
ALL RACES									
1980	63,427	77	18	8	6	3	2	2	4
1990	64,137	73	22	8	5	7	2	3	3
1998	71,377	68	23	8	5	9	1	4	4
WHITE									
1980	52,242	83	14	7	4	1	2	2	2
1990	51,390	79	16	8	4	3	1	3	2
1998	56,124	74	18	8	4	5	1	5	3
BLACK									
1980	9,375	42	44	11	16	13	4	2	12
1990	10,018	38	51	10	12	27	2	4	8
1998	11,414	36	51	9	9	32	1	4	9
HISPANIC									
1980	5,459	75	20	6	8	4	2	2	4
1990	7,174	67	27	7	10	8	2	3	3
1998	10,863	64	27	6	8	12	1	4	5

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States 2000

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Table 2. Unmarried Couples in the United States, 1980-1999

Number by Presence of Children	YEAR				
	1980	1985	1990	1995	1999
Unmarried Couples (in thousands)	1,589	1,983	2,856	3,668	4,486
No Children Under 15 Years Old	1,159	1,380	1,966	2,349	2,981
Some Children Under 15 Years Old	431	603	891	1,319	1,505
Percent With Children Under 15 Years Old	27.1	30.4	31.2	35.9	33.5

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States 2000

Table 3. Families With Own Children Under 18 Years Old, by Metropolitan-Nonmetropolitan Residence in the U.S., 1998

Place of Residences	Number of Families (in thousands), and the Percent of Families, With Own Children Under 18 Years Old			
	All Races	White	Black	Hispanic
Metropolitan				
Total	27,872	41,072	7,781	8,620
Married-Couple Families	20,243 (72.7%)	32,719 (79.7%)	3,341 (42.9%)	6,138 (71.2%)
Male Householder	1,355 (4.9%)	1,732 (4.2%)	292 (3.7%)	347 (4.0%)
Female Household	6,273 (22.5%)	6,621 (16.1%)	4,149 (53.3%)	2,136 (24.8%)
Nonmetropolitan				
Total	6,888	10,894	1,335	958
Married-Couple Families	5,026 (73.0%)	8,545 (78.4%)	654 (49.0%)	696 (72.7%)
Male Householder	443 (6.4%)	531 (4.9%)	78 (5.8%)	49 (5.1%)
Female Household	1,419 (20.6%)	1,817 (16.7%)	602 (45.1%)	213 (22.2%)

Source: Current Population Survey, March 1998

For white and Hispanic children living in "Mother Only" families, the main reason for this status is due to a divorce. For African Americans, "Mother Only" families are becoming increasingly linked to the never married status of the mother. In 1998, 32 percent of Black children living in a "Mother Only" family had a mother who was never married. In 1980, the figure was only 13 percent. A large proportion of these unmarried mothers are teenagers.

What has undergone dramatic increases in recent years has been the existence of unmarried couples (cohabitation). In 1980, just under 1.6 million couples were cohabiting (see Table 2). This number increased to 2.9 million in 1990, and has approached the 4.5 million mark in 1999. This represents a 282 percent increase over the 1980-99 time period. Of the 4.5 million unmarried couples in the U.S., nearly 34 percent have children under 15 years of age in the home.

When the living arrangements of children under 18 years of age are examined by place of residence, we uncover only minor differences. Overall, most children under 18 years old living in either a metro or nonmetro area tend to be living in married couple family (see Table 3). Little differences exists among white or Hispanic families with regard to family type. Nonmetro Black children under 18 years of age are more likely to live in a married-couple family then metro Black children (49 percent vs. 42.9 percent). The largest share of metro Black children under 18 are living in female households (53.3 percent).

"Despite the increasing involvement of women in the work force, the 1991 poverty statistics are startling when examined by family type."

The distribution of family households in the South by family type is presented in Table 4. It presents the actually number of family households that are composed of married couple, male only, and female only parents. Figure 1 visually presents the proportional distribution of these family households by race. Among white family households, some 82 percent are composed of married couple families. Among Hispanics, the lion's share of family households are made up of married couple families (73.6 percent). Approximately 1 in 4 Hispanic family households involve the presence of a female only parent. With regard to African American family households, nearly 48 percent are made up of married couple families, while a near equal proportion (45.6 percent) have a female only parent in the household.

Women Participation in the U.S. Labor Force

While the structure of America's families has undergone dramatic changes over the past few decades, an equally significant change has occurred in the involvement of women in the labor force, especially among women with children. As Table 5 reveals, less than 2 in 5 married women with any children were engaged in the workforce in 1970. By 1999, the number had expanded to 7 in 10 . When specific ages of children are examined, we find that barely 30 percent of married women with young children under 6 years of age were employed in the workforce in 1970. This number doubled (61.8 percent) by 1999. Among women who were widowed, divorced, or separated, approximately 1 in 2 with children under 6 were actively working in 1970. By 1999, the number had grown to more than 3 in 4. For women with children 6-17 years of age, the

Table 4. Type of Family Households in the South (in 1,000s) by Race and Ethnicity, 1998

Type of Family Household	Race/Ethnicty		
	White	Black	Hispanic
Married Couple Family	16,684	2,261	1,724
Male Householder	1,007	305	147
Female Householder	2,662	2,155	470

Source: Current Population Survey, March 1998

Figure 1. Distribution of Family Households in the South in 1998

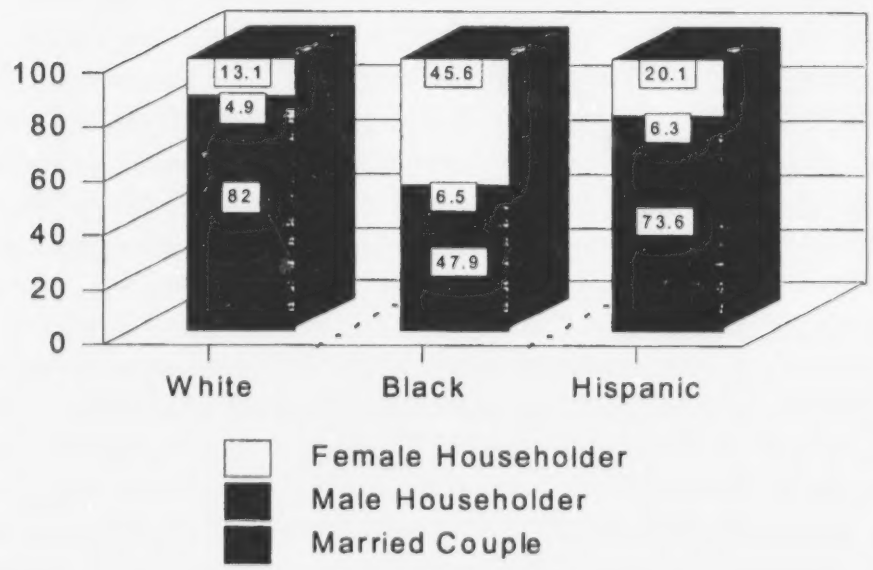

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Table 5. Labor Force Participation Rates of U.S. Women in the Labor Force by Marital and Presence and Age of Children, 1970-1999

Year	With Any Children							
	Total			Children 6 to 17 Years Old Only			Children Under 6 Years Ol	
	Single	Married[1]	Other[2]	Single	Married	Other	Single	Married
1970	Not Available	39.7	60.7	Not Available	49.2	66.9	Not Available	30.3
1980	52.0	54.1	69.4	67.6	61.7	74.6	44.1	45.1
1990	55.2	66.3	74.2	69.7	73.6	79.7	48.7	58.9
1995	57.5	70.2	75.3	67.0	76.2	79.5	53.0	63.5
1999	73.4	70.1	80.4	82.6	77.1	81.8	68.1	61.8

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States 2000

[1]Husband Present

[2]Widowed, Divorced, or Separated

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percent employed in 1999 proved to be 77 percent or higher among all three marital status categories examined (i.e., single, married, or other). Clearly, these data show that the lion's share of women with children in the U.S. are actively participating in our nation's labor force.

Poverty Status and Family Type

Despite the increasing involvement of women in the work force, households that are headed by females (with no spouse present) and that have children under 18 years old continue to struggle in terms of their capacity to escape poverty. This fact is made particularly clear when the poverty status of female-headed households is contrasted with that of married couple families.

"The changing makeup of the family, coupled with the labor force and poverty attributes of these households, are creating much stress on parents as they strive to effectively carry out their human resource development function."

At the national level, two-parent families with children under 18 years of age living at home are far less likely to be living in poverty than are female-headed households with children in this age grouping (see Figures 2 and 3). Among married couple families, less than 6 percent residing in metro areas were living in poverty in 1999. For their nonmetro counterparts, the figure was nearly 9 percent. Interestingly, nonmetro married couple blacks tended to do better than married black couple in metro areas in terms of escaping poverty. Whether living in a metro or nonmetro area, the percent of married Hispanic couples living below the poverty line proved to be quite sizable in 1999 (16.4 percent in metro, and 21.4 percent in nonmetro areas).

Among female-headed households with no spouse present, a significant percent were poverty stricken in 1999. And, regardless of the race or ethnic group under consideration, poverty proved to be higher among female headed households located in the region's nonmetropolitan areas. For example, among black female headed households with children under 18 years old, poverty touched 44.9 percent of those living in metro households and 56.1 percent of those in nonmetro households (see Figure 3).

When attention is focused on the Southern region of the United States, one finds that with only a few exceptions, the South is closely aligned with the nation in terms of family poverty rates across race and ethnic groups. As is true at the national level, poverty among married couple families in the South tends to be highest among Hispanic couples (see Figure 4), particularly among those living in the nonmetro South (23.3 percent). It is among female headed families with children under 18 that poverty tends to be most acute in the South. In particular, the proportion of these families living in poverty (as of 1999) stands at 33.7 percent in the metro South, and 48.5 percent in the nonmetro area of the region. The most impoverished group tends to be black female-headed households (with children under 18 years old) in the nonmetro South (56 percent), closely followed by female headed Hispanic families in the nonmetro South (51.8 percent). The percentage is smaller, but still sizable, among white female headed households in the nonmetro areas of the region, where 43 percent are found to living below the poverty line.

There is little doubt that these trends are having, and will continue to have, a major impact on the lives of many of these children. The changing makeup of the family, coupled with the labor force and poverty attributes of these households, are creating much stress on parents as they strive to effectively carry out their human resource development function. It is to this topic we now turn.

Figure 2. Poverty Status of Married Couple Families in the U.S. with Children Under 18 Years Old, 1999

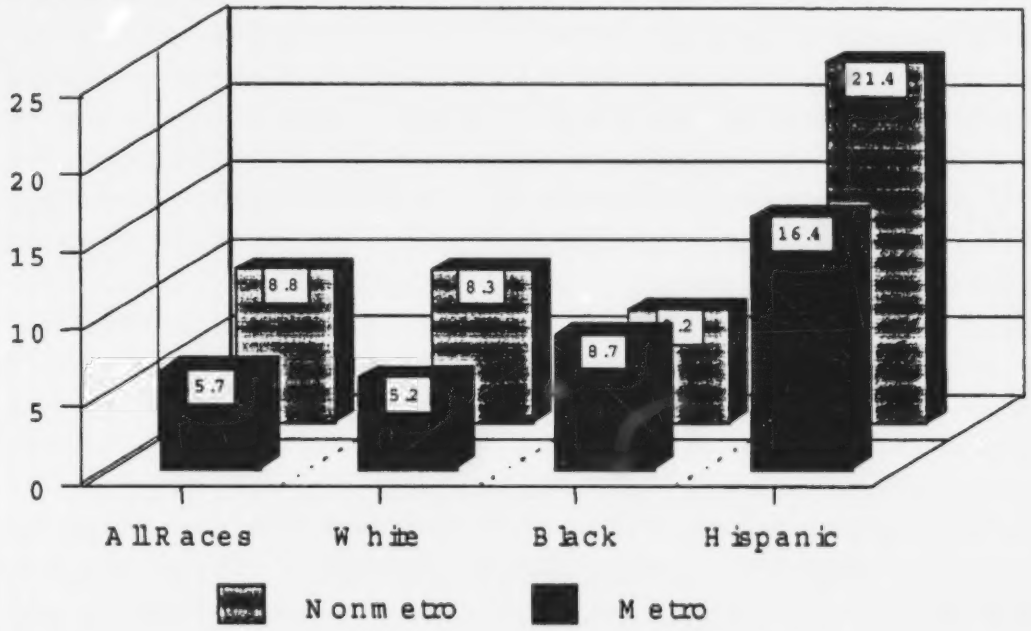
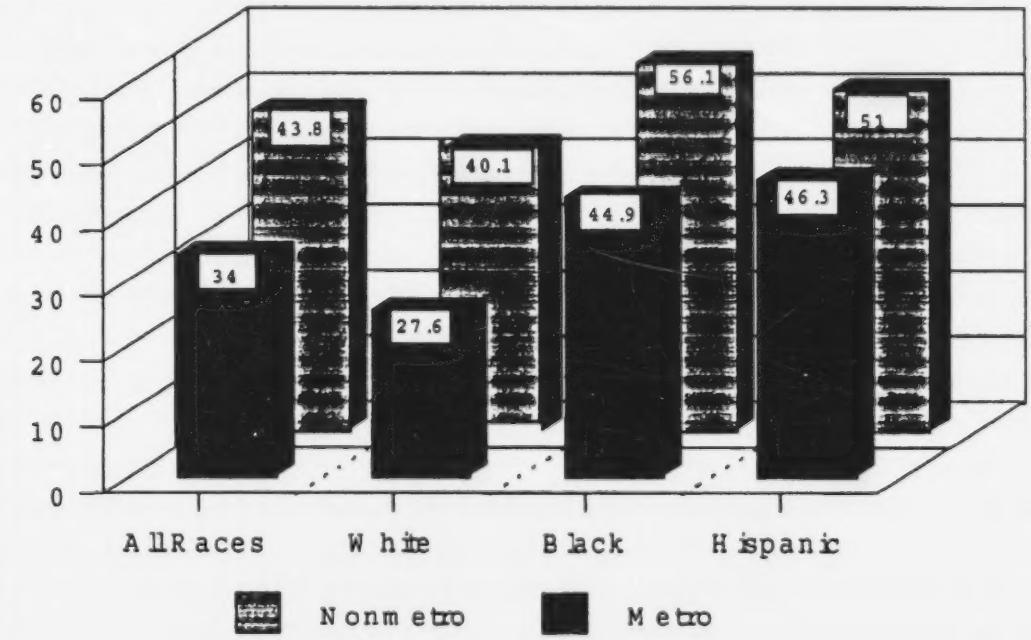


Figure 3. Poverty Status of Female Headed, No Spouse Present, Families in the U.S. with Children Under 18 Years Old, 1999



Source: Current Population Survey, March 2000

Note: Hispanic may be of any race

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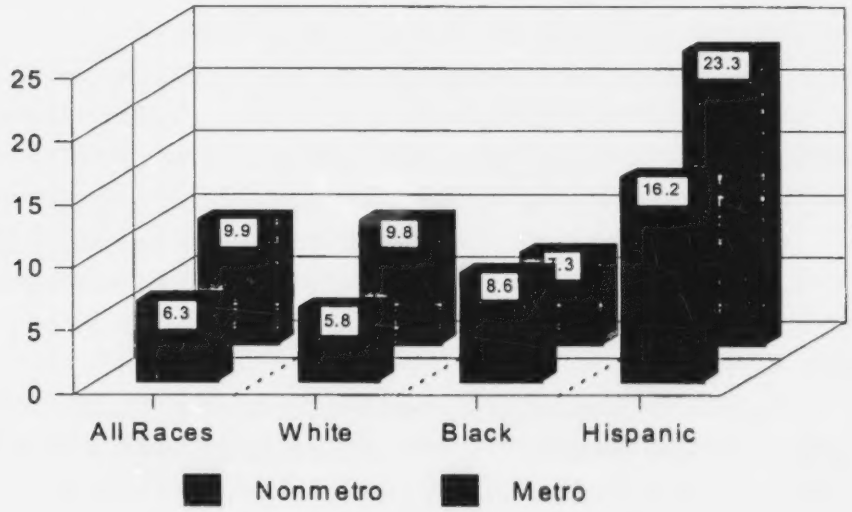
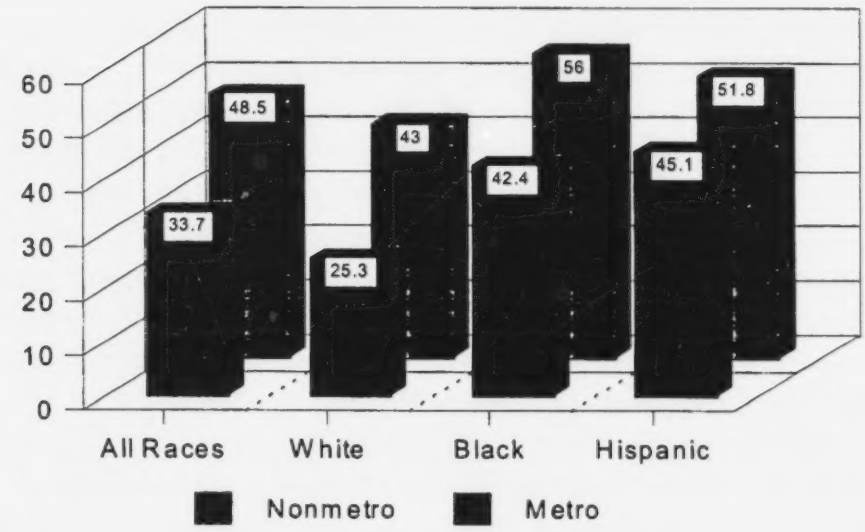
Figure 4. Poverty Status of Married Couple Families in the South with Children Under 18 Years Old, 1999



Poverty Status of Female Headed, No Spouse Present, Families in the South with Children Under 18 Years Old, 1999



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The Human Resource Development Functions of the Family

It has been stated that no other institution is as significant or critically important to a child's (or society's) welfare than is his/her family. This is true across all social and economic lines. Most families, regardless of composition, care enormously about their children. Families prepare their children for education. Through their expectations and aspirations, they place demands on children for performance, both socially or academically. By example, they teach the child how to be a parent, how to be an employee, and how to function in society.

Research conducted by Coleman and his associates [4,5] tend to show that the family's influence on the development of their child can be seen as threefold: families provide financial capital, human capital, and social capital to their child. Financial capital constitutes the wealth and income which the family possesses, resources that can be used to allow the child to take part in activities that might enhance achievement. Human capital represents the educational level of the parents, a measure that offers some clue of the learning environment which the child may be exposed to at home. And social capital reflects the nature of the relationship that exists between the child and his/her parents. It addresses the quality and strength of the interactions between parents and the child.

"Research conducted by Coleman and his associates [4,5] tend to show that the family's influence on the development of their child can be seen as threefold: families provide financial capital, human capital, and social capital to their child."

Why is the research by Coleman and his associates so important? The reason is because for many years, the belief was that the educational and income status of parents had the most potent impact on the human resource development of their children. That is, the socioeconomic status of parents was seen as having a significant influence on the aspirations and achievement levels of their children. So, children from families with higher socioeconomic status (that is, whose parents had a good education and income) were more likely to place a high value on educational achievement and to aspire to higher status occupations.

While the importance of parental socioeconomic status is undeniable, Coleman's research shows that the presence of social capital in the family plays a significant in the human resource development of children. In fact, Coleman states that the educational and financial standing of parents are far less critical to the educational growth of the child if social capital is not present in the family, represented by the quality interactions and relations between parents and the child [2]. As an example, Coleman notes that despite the fact that parents today are better educated than ever before, the academic performance of their children has not always kept pace with the parents' educational standing. The reason, argues Coleman, is that the social capital of the family has slowly eroded because parents are not around the home as much or are not taking the time to interact with and relate to their children.

The bottom line is that this weakening of the family's social capital is having some negative consequences on children as evidenced by poor academic performance and low career aspirations [3]. Newspaper columnist William Raspberry offered a similar argument. He noted that [9] :

> . . . much of what we talk about in our discussions of school failure has little to do with what happens at school and a great deal to do with what happens (or fails to happen) at home. For the youngsters who come to school ready for learning, the schools are working pretty well.

What Coleman's findings, as well as Raspberry's commentary, suggest is that families with high social capital, represented by the presence of adults in the home and positive parent/child interactions on issues such as academic, social, economic and personal concerns, are more likely to have children who are socially competent and academically successful in school. What is most encouraging is that even among parents who have limited education and low incomes, their children can be equally capable of realizing academic success and can effectively transition into the world of work if these children are situated in a family environment where social capital is both present and strong.

The Importance of Community Investments in Families/Children

The academic, emotional, and social problems that many youth are experiencing today has created a situation in which much finger pointing is taking place. Some parents are blaming teachers for their lack of real interest and understanding of children. Teachers are blaming society for its unwillingness to support schools. And parents are being criticized for their lack of attention to and participation in their child's education.

It is true that children who come from disadvantaged economic backgrounds come to school with issues other than academic readiness. Physical health is linked to a child's ability to learn. Children who lack rudimentary health care may have hearing, vision, health problems, emotional difficulties and development delays that will interfere with learning. Children who are hungry or stressed are not able to be attentive in the classroom. Although families are a child's first teacher, many need help in order to meet a child's basic needs.

Several years ago, a report published by the National Association of State Boards of Education titled, *Caring Communities* [7] , outlined a series of recommendations that were designed to create supportive communities that could offer families a much needed helping hand. Two of the recommendations contained in that report remain viable even today. They are as follows:

- We recommend providing comprehensive support for young children and their families. Communities should help parents meet their need for health care, child care, and family support through quality public programs, enhanced initiatives by employers, and stronger informal efforts by voluntary organizations and individuals.
- We recommend improving support for young children and families in public schools. Elementary schools should implement developmentally appropriate teaching and assessment, based on our understanding of how young children learn and develop. Schools should also strengthen efforts in parent involvement and staff development and work with community agencies to provide appropriate and effective services to children and families.

"What is most encouraging is that even among parents who have limited education and low incomes, their children can achieve much academically and in the world of work if they are successful in creating a family environment in which social capital is both present and strong."

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Given the concerns expressed by Coleman regarding the deterioration occurring in the presence of social capital in the home, it appears that a partial response entails a more active role on the part of the community in helping fill the social capital gap that so many young people are experiencing today. The question is how might communities be an important source of social capital for young residents? Among the potential strategies are the following:

- Offering youth a set of positive experiences through the establishment of organized youth activities.
- Having organizations or individuals who are available to listen to youth who may need help with their problems or who long for someone simply to talk to.
- Local people giving attention and consideration to the views that youth have with regard to the future direction of their community.
- The business sector having an active involvement in the school system, involvement that is founded on its desire to better assist people to take a hard look at the needs of families youth in their academic performance and their career plans. This could include job shadowing and mentoring programs.

These few examples are all symbolic of the presence of social capital in the community. Together, such initiatives are likely to help youth be successful because of the caring attitude that they perceive as being present in their community.

Building A Family Friendly Community

The changing nature of the American family has raised some concern about the ability of communities to devote attention to the needs of families. Lichter and his colleagues [6] have argued that if a goal of our society is to improve the academic success and job skills of today's youth, focus must be given on the family. Efforts are needed that can further strengthen the ability of families to succeed in their human resource development role. Communities must be a key player in making this happen.

In recent years, Alberta, Canada developed a comprehensive checklist for assessing the family friendliness of a community. Among the key items contained in its checklist were the following [8]:

Neighborhoods

- ❑ Neighbors welcome families as community members.
- ❑ People know their neighbors.
- ❑ Community events are sensitive to, and reflective of, the diversity of family types and multicultural aspects of the area.
- ❑ Families know about community resources and activities available to them.
- ❑ Neighbors support each other (block parents, neighborhood crime watch, community leagues).
- ❑ Neighbors are available and willing to help in an emergency.

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Schools

- ❑ Schools welcome families and community members.
- ❑ Schools plan events that include all family members.
- ❑ Schools are responsive to different family types and structures and sensitive to their needs.
- ❑ Schools are accessible to the community that they serve.
- ❑ Outreach support for children in need and their families is facilitated by the school.
- ❑ Business and schools work together in partnership to encourage career explorations, job training, and skill development.

Parenting

- ❑ Workplaces are sensitive to and support the needs of working parents.
- ❑ Support networks are available for families in need.
- ❑ Parents are involved in activities and decisions that affect their children.
- ❑ Community members value and support the role of parents.

Children

- ❑ Community members value and care for children.
- ❑ Children contribute and are a part of the life of the community.
- ❑ Programs are available to support the growth and development of young children.
- ❑ Quality child care alternatives are available and accessible.

Workplaces

- ❑ Workplaces provide options that support the parenting role (such as flextime).
- ❑ Managers are sensitized to work and family realities.

Public Involvement and Support

- ❑ Elected officials are sensitive to family issues.
- ❑ Community-based systems of support for families are available.
- ❑ Policies that are approved by, and programs that are offered by, local governments are assessed for their impact on families.

No doubt, the items contained in this checklist can provide some guidance on the type of concrete strategies that might be undertaken to advance the well-being of parents and their children. Certainly, taking steps to become a family friendly community will not be easy. On the other hand, failure to invest in local families and children may spell trouble in the future. Simply put, families play a vital role in shaping the educational and career aspirations of their children. Thus, they are a key ingredient in advancing the human resource endowments of a community.

So, the questions a community must constantly ask itself is this: "What must be done, if anything, to strengthen the ability of local families to carry out their important roles and functions? What should the community do to promote the human resource development of its young people?" Certainly, the answers to these questions are far from easy, but they warrant careful discussion and deliberation by community leaders and citizens.

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[4] Coleman, J.S. and T. Hoffer. 1987. Public and Private High Schools: The Impact of Communities. New York: Basic Books.

[5] Coleman, J.S, T. Hoffer, and S. Kilgore. 1982. High School Achievement. New York: Basic Books.

[6] Lichter, Daniel T., Lionel J. Beaulieu, Jill L. Findeis, and Ruy Teixeira. 1993. "Human capital, labor supply, and poverty in rural America." Pp. 39-67 in Persistent Poverty in Rural America. Rural Sociological Society Task Force on Persistent Rural Poverty.

[7] Nation Association of State Board of Education. Caring Communities: Supporting Young Children and Families. The Report of the National Task Force on School Readiness, 1991.

[8] Premier's Council in Support of Alberta Families. 1994. "Family friendly community checklist: International Year of the Family. Edmonton, Canada.

[9] Raspberry, William. 1992. "Something has to be done at home." Article appearing in the February 25 issue of the Gainesville Sun, Gainesville, Florida.

Module Seven Instructor's Guide

Human Resources and the Family

Small Group Activities

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Human Resources and the Family

Activity #1

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart once stated that we might not be able to define a family, but we know one when we see it. Because definitions of families vary widely, it is helpful to have the group develop a working definition of family. Depending on total group size, this might be done in small groups.

- Brainstorm family definitions, functions, and characteristics. Accept everything at this point - no discussion of pro's and con's.
- Go through each of items listed in previous activity and discuss each in terms of inclusivity/exclusivity and utility in defining legal and social relationships. If the group has difficulty generating ideas in activity one, use the elements of each definition previously provided; for example, two or more people related by birth or related by marriage residing in the same household.
- Develop a definition that is acceptable to the group from the selection of characteristics in the second activity. Who in the community "fits" into this definition? Who does not fit? Was Supreme Court Justice Potter correct?

Human Resources and the Family

Activity #2

After thinking about the definition of family, what shape are families in? A poll can be taken of the group. Local views can be compared with the Newsweek/Gallup Organization Poll. N/G items are responses to the Newsweek/Gallup Poll conducted in November 1990.

- Is the American family better off or worse off than it was 10 year ago?

_____		Better	_____	Worse
N/G	39%	Better	49%	Worse

- Will the American family be better off or worse off 10 years from now? Better

_____		Better	_____	Worse
N/G	42%	Better	42%	Worse

- Which do you feel is more important for a family these days?

_____		To make some financial sacrifices so that
N/G	68%	one parent can stay home to raise the children.
_____		To have both parents working so the family
N/G	27%	can benefit from the highest possible income.

- When husbands and wives with young children are not getting along, should they stay together for the sake of the children or should they separate rather than raise the children in a hostile atmosphere?

_____		Separate	_____	Stay together
N/G	70%	Separate	%	Stay together

Which one of theses family concerns causes you to worry the most?

	N/G
_____Finding and paying for good health care	21%
_____Keeping up with housing costs/payments	17%
_____Paying for children's college tuition	16%
_____Financing your retirement	12%
_____Getting good day care for children	9%
_____Taking care of elderly, ailing parents	

- Do you think the provisions and funding of government programs for elderly, such as Medicare and social security, are adequate to meet your needs now or in the future?

		No		Yes
N/G	68%	No	28%	Yes

- Should unmarried couples, including homosexual couples, have the same legal rights as married couples?

Unmarried couples		Yes		No
N/G	33%	Yes	61%	No
Homosexual couples		Yes		No
N/G	23%	Yes	69%	No

Human Resources and the Family

Activity #3

1. Do an environmental scan of local support available to families. Use the following chart.

Agency/ Institution	Type of Program	Formal/ Informal	Target Families (Audiences)

2. Review the scan and list gaps in any of the columns. Review for duplication/ competition of/for services and audiences.

3. Brainstorm methods for alleviating local gaps in service and support.

4. Discuss the potential consequences of each method generated in number 3.

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Human Resources and the Family

Activity #4

Family Friendly Community Checklist[1]

Introduction

This *Family Friendly Community Checklist* has been developed as a tool to assist communities in reviewing those aspects of the community that can detract from, or contribute to, family well-being.

You are being asked to imagine a community that you are happy to live in and proud of the way it supports families. Then imagine what it takes to make that happened. This Checklist offers suggestions, which are intended to trigger thought and discussion. The intent of this Checklist is to raise the profile of families and their needs. It is intended to encourage communities to assess how they demonstrate their concern about families. This might include anything from having a local campaign to improve cleanliness in the community, making buildings more accessible to parents with strollers, or involving seniors in a neighborhood child care program. It may involve training staff to be more sensitive to family needs or it may mean improving safety on a playground.

The Checklist can be used to assess your community from the perspective of the neighborhood or at a broader level. Check the areas where you feel your community has been supportive of family members of all ages and indicate where changes are needed. Find out the needs and priorities of families and establish a plan to improve the supports available to them in your community.

The *Family Friendly Community Checklist* is a beginning step in helping you to make improvements in your community to better support families. By evaluating the impact that different aspects of the community have on families and family life, you can identify where improvements are necessary. This Checklist has been developed as a resource in order to help highlight the needs of families and the extent or support available to them in their communities.

Making this Checklist Relevant to Your Community

Community can be defined in a variety of ways. The Family Friendly Community checklist can be applied at any level, be it at the county, municipality, or the neighborhood. It can be used by city/town councils, boards, neighborhood groups, or any organization within a community having a desire to review the family friendliness of various parts of the community (such as schools, shopping facilities, churches, recreational programs).

This Checklist is designed to spark ideas and discussions about the family friendliness of your community. It is intended to be used as a guide for contributing to a more family friendly community. Not all of the items will apply in every situation. The Checklist can be expanded to fit your requirements by adding additional items under each category.

Please rate your community on the following items. Place a checkmark (V) by each of the items that you feel exist in your community right now.

1. Neighborhoods

- ❑ Neighbors welcome families as community members
- ❑ People know their neighbors
- ❑ Appropriate community events and celebrations include all family members
- ❑ Community events are sensitive to, and reflective of, the diversity of family types and multicultural aspects of the area
- ❑ Families know about community resources and activities available to them through community bulletin boards, information lines, publications etc.
- ❑ Locations are established for families, to recycle toys, tools, clothing, equipment, etc.
- ❑ Families have access to a community meeting house or venue
- ❑ Food stores, public library, swimming pool, park, playground, post office, meeting places, community halls are within easy access of neighborhoods
- ❑ Houses and neighborhoods are designed to meet family needs (safe, accessible, child friendly, adequate lighting, safe crosswalks, road maintenance, sidewalks, etc.)
- ❑ Neighbors support each other (block parents, neighborhood crime watch, community leagues)
- ❑ Public transportation systems arid community-based systems of support are accessible and available to all members of the community
- ❑ Neighbors are available and willing to help in an emergency
- ❑ Mediation is available to settle disputes between neighbors
- ❑ There are natural gathering places for people of all ages
- ❑ There is a sense of pride and cooperation in the community (i.e., hospitable, neighborhood cleanups, etc.)

Based on a consideration of all these factors, how does your community rate? (Circle one)

Excellent		Good		Needs Improvement	
5	4	3	2	1	0

2. Schools

- ❑ Schools welcome families and community members
- ❑ Schools plan events that include all family members
- ❑ Schools are responsive to different family types and structures and sensitive to their needs
- ❑ Schools are accessible to the community that they serve
- ❑ Outreach support for children in need and their families is facilitated/arranged by the school
- ❑ Public participation is initiated on decisions that affect families
- ❑ Schools have effective, functioning parent advisory committees
- ❑ Before and after school child care is available at or near the school with busing arrangements where required
- ❑ The curriculum is sensitive to community values and standards
- ❑ Schools are designed to meet the needs of children and their families (cafeteria, playgrounds, recreation areas, etc.)
- ❑ School facilities are made available for after house use
- ❑ Staff are friendly when meeting the public
- ❑ Parent/teacher meetings are arranged to reflect parents' work schedules
- ❑ Business and schools work together in partnerships to encourage career exploration, job training, and skill development

Based on a consideration of all these factors, how does your community rate? (Circle one)

Excellent		Good			Needs Improvement
5	4	3	2	1	0

3. Playgrounds/Parks/Public Places

- ❑ Playground equipment (swings, slides, teeter-totters, etc.) is safe, well maintained and built to proper standards
- ❑ Designated areas are available for children of different age groups
- ❑ Public places are available for varying needs of families
- ❑ Play areas are designated and protected
- ❑ Shady and sunny areas are available
- ❑ Proper ground maintenance is evident
- ❑ Area is free of dangerous objects (i.e., glass, sharp objects)
- ❑ There are places for parents to sit and talk while children play
- ❑ Picnic areas are provided
- ❑ Garbage receptacles are provided
- ❑ Playgrounds are easily accessible for children
- ❑ Play zones are clearly marked for passing motorists
- ❑ Community gardens are available
- ❑ Public spaces are attractive for family use (wild flowers, fruit bearing trees, etc.)
- ❑ Attractive rest areas are available in public places
- ❑ Parks are planned for safe use by citizens both during the day and at night
- ❑ Playgrounds and parks offer programs that the whole family can participate in for various age groups

Based on a consideration of all these factors, how does your community rate? (Circle one)

Excellent		Good			Needs Improvement
5	4	3	2	1	0

4. Security

- ❑ Fire departments, police stations, ambulance services have a reasonable response time to all neighborhoods in the community
- ❑ Supports, both formal and informal, are available to families in case of violence, crime, substance dependency, gambling addiction, racism, child abuse, spouse abuse, sexual abuse or vandalism
- ❑ Families feel safe and secure in the neighborhood at all time (Neighborhood Crime Watch, Block Parents, known places to go when in trouble)
- ❑ Community members are aware of the problems/issues in their community
- ❑ Community members are involved in improving the neighborhood
- ❑ The community has adequate lighting for streets, buildings, and public places
- ❑ People watch out for each other, their homes and their property
- ❑ Neighbors know each other, and can count on help from each other in an emergency
- ❑ Community members join together to act on issues of concern
- ❑ Partnerships between the police and families on crime prevention techniques are encouraged
- ❑ Information on services offered to families on fire protection, tips to prevent fires, and safe fire routes are distributed and reviewed
- ❑ Families are informed about services, neighborhood routes and times of police surveillance

Based on a consideration of all these factors, how does your community rate? (Circle one)

Excellent		Good			Needs Improvement
5	4	3	2	1	0

5. Health and Wellness

- ❑ Family members are aware of the range of health care services available to them in their community
- ❑ Emergency medical care is available on a 24 hour basis
- ❑ Local health facilities and ambulance services are available
- ❑ Family physicians are accessible to the community
- ❑ Preventive services are available to provide information and assistance on diet and nutrition, fitness and lifestyle, and stress management for families
- ❑ Support, counseling and referral are available for families and their members dealing with problems
- ❑ Health professionals, hospitals and emergency services are sensitive to the special needs of children and their families
- ❑ Families with special support needs (i.e., seniors, disabled, mentally ill persons) have access to appropriate health care services
- ❑ Self-help groups are available and encourage participation
- ❑ Faith communities make their facilities available for use by the community
- ❑ Faith communities are active in providing support through outreach work and networking
- ❑ Recreational programs are well publicized and accessible to all community members
- ❑ Families have access to local recreation for health and fitness
- ❑ Opportunities for volunteer involvement are made available
- ❑ Adequate attention is given to ensure a safe environment for families

Based on a consideration of all these factors, how does your community rate? (Circle one)

Excellent		Good			Needs Improvement
5	4	3	2	1	0

6. Family Serving Agencies

- ❑ Staff treat family members with respect, and spend time and effort in developing rapport with family members
- ❑ Services assist family members to build and maintain their confidence and competence in their family roles
- ❑ Services build on the strengths of the family as a whole as well as its individual members
- ❑ Services help family members to become an active part of the program as well as a resource for each other
- ❑ Parents play an important part in program decisions
- ❑ Program is located in community it serves
- ❑ Services are available at hours that are convenient for families
- ❑ Staff view family members' search for information and support as a sign of family strength, not a sign of weakness
- ❑ Program serves as a resource to family members, providing information about its own services and about other resources in the community
- ❑ Program in 'family-friendly' and welcomes all family members
- ❑ Programs that fit the demographic mix of the community are offered after consultations with the community
- ❑ The needs, desires, feelings, and strengths of all family members are considered in relation to service planning and delivery
- ❑ Family members are informed as to who will have access to information about the family and how confidentiality will be maintained
- ❑ Family members have the option of being present and participating in discussions about their family
- ❑ An appeal process is available, and family members are informed about how to use it to resolve their concerns

Based on a consideration of all these factors, how does your community rate? (Circle one)

Excellent		Good		Needs Improvement
5	4	3	2	1	0

7. Parenting

- ❑ Workplaces are sensitive to and support the needs of working parents
- ❑ Support networks are available for families in need
- ❑ A community resource guide is available for parents
- ❑ Programs and support for the parenting role are available (information, support, resources, etc.)
- ❑ Parents are involved in activities and decisions that affect their children (education, health, career, etc.)
- ❑ Appropriate advocacy groups that address issues of concern to parents are present
- ❑ Appeal mechanisms are available to parents on decisions which affect their families
- ❑ Parent and children are helped to feel welcome by staff and customers at local restaurants, shopping malls, and businesses
- ❑ Programs and activities which involve parents and children are available
- ❑ Community members value and support the role of parents
- ❑ There is support available in the community for parents who stay at home with their children

Based on a consideration of all these factors, how does your community rate? (Circle one)

Excellent		Good		Needs Improvement	
5	4	3	2	1	0

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8. Children

- ❑ Children have access to both parents, to their grandparents or other seniors, and to members of their extended families
- ❑ Community members value and care for children
- ❑ Children contribute and are a part of the life of the community
- ❑ Children are present and participate in activities and events organized by the community
- ❑ Programs, such as preschool classes and parent-child activities, are available to support the growth and development of young children and to support the role of parents
- ❑ Children in trouble know where to go for help (Block Parents, counselors, distress line, etc.)
- ❑ Local restaurants, shopping malls and businesses have change rooms, play areas, and staff that are happy to serve children
- ❑ Streets and crossings are safe for children and walkways are clean and well lit
- ❑ Play areas are safe and visible to parents
- ❑ Quality child care alternatives are available and accessible to those who require them
- ❑ Facilities are accessible to strollers, carriages, walkers, wheelchairs, etc.
- ❑ Safe places are available for children to participate in unstructured play activities
- ❑ Supervised arts and craft programs are available to encourage children's creativity
- ❑ Activities for children are available without concern for cost (nature walks, etc.)

Based on a consideration of all these factors, how does your community rate? (Circle one)

Excellent		Good		Needs Improvement	
5	4	3	2	1	0

9. Teenagers and Young Adults

- ❑ Teenagers and young adults have opportunities for input into planning and decision-making about youth programs and activities
- ❑ Teenagers and young adults are supported in planned community events
- ❑ Employment and volunteer opportunities are available for teenagers and young adults
- ❑ Counseling and education are available on teen pregnancy, drugs and alcohol, sexuality, parenting, relationships, etc.
- ❑ Teen parents are supported in the community in both their parenting and student roles
- ❑ Staff in local restaurants, malls, and businesses treat teenagers with respect
- ❑ Community members value and care for teenagers and young adults
- ❑ Teens contribute and are a part of the life of the community
- ❑ Teens are present and participate in activities and events
- ❑ There are places and spaces available for teen gatherings (sports, dances, etc.)
- ❑ Adult and peer counseling are available for teenagers and young adults who need help and support
- ❑ Parents, teachers, counselors and others are able to identify depression in teenagers and young adults and provide needed support and referral
- ❑ Educational opportunities are available to meet the needs of young adults
- ❑ Support is available for teens and young adults experiencing problems

Based on a consideration of all these factors, how does your community rate? (Circle one)

Excellent		Good		Needs Improvement	
5	4	3	2	1	0

10. Seniors

- ❑ There are organized ways of encouraging intergenerational activities involving seniors
- ❑ Seniors have recognized and accessible roles to play in meaningful work, volunteer, and other types of activities
- ❑ Seniors have an opportunity for input into the decision-making process, i.e., participate in community meetings to discuss local/community issues
- ❑ Community members value and care for seniors
- ❑ Seniors participate in activities and events in the community
- ❑ Adult children are supported in their care giving responsibilities for their senior parents
- ❑ Flexible options are available for seniors to maintain independent living with access to and support from family members
- ❑ Seniors are encouraged to get involved in community services and activities
- ❑ Public transportation routes are appropriate around areas with high density senior citizens residents
- ❑ Senior citizens are assisted by allowing off-hour unscheduled stops for their safety on public transportation

Based on a consideration of all these factors, how does your community rate? (Circle one)

Excellent		Good			Needs Improvement
5	4	3	2	1	0

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Based on a consideration of all these factors, how does your community rate? (Circle one)

Excellent		Good		Needs Improvement	
5	4	3	2	1	0

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